644 The Mogho Naba spends the rest of the day receiving individ-
431 uals who have come to see him, accepting poussoum (gifts to the chief) and giving dam, gouré, foutou (garments), etc., and listening to the praises of his courtiers.

Mogho Naba Na Tough'la, "The Mogho Naba Goes to La" (1)

1. A dependent village in the administrative district of Yako, Koudougou Circle.

• 173 Tradition relates that a certain Mogho Naba, Naba Warga,
644 had a favorite, the only one who knew that his preferred food was
léla (fruit of the léhinga or wild plum tree). It should be added
[267] that ordinarily anything might be chosen as a favorite food, and it should not be supposed that the Mogho Naba eats only the best foods. Obviously he does not lack choice morsels, but he cannot be expected to like everything. One day this woman asked leave to visit her home at Lâ and failed to return. The Magho Naba, tired of waiting and missing his favorite food, had his horse saddled one morning and announced that he wished to go and join his wife. His ministers begged him to stay at home and asked him to put off his departure until the next day... Every morning the preparations for the departure were repeated and always there was the same pleading, up to the time of the ruler's death. His son, [61] who succeeded him, chose to follow his example. The following paragraph describes the manner in which this custom was still practiced only a few years ago.

[492] When the Mogho Naba appears in the morning, one of his horses, partially harnessed, is brought into the courtyard bearing a saddle with silver stirrups, but with the girth unbuckled. After the Mogho Naba has responded to the salutations of his ministers and the whole court and has dealt with some minor matters, he declares that he is going to Lâ. The court officials, especially the Kamsaongo Naba, appear before him and say: "Sire, order them to unsaddle your horse; you shall go tomorrow." The Mogho Naba of course agrees to this, but he retires to his apartments rather

173 644 abruptly, as though he were somewhat provoked by this obstacle to what he wants to do. At the same time the saddle is removed and the horse returned to the stables.

It should also be noted that every morning the pougtiéma (first wife) orders a basket and hamper to be filled with all the things needed for a journey, intending to accompany her husband to Lâ.

As soon as the Mogho Naba postpones his journey to the following day, the pougtiéma, duly warned, unpacks her basket.

Today, the breath of civilization has blown upon these ancient practices, and the present Mogho Naba merely sees his horse, which is walked up and down while he is receiving his ministers. The animal is at once taken back to the stables when the [62] king returns to his palace without having tried to mount it, much less having heard any entreaties from the Kamsaongo Naba.

Koaga Basgo

644 789 At sundown each day the Baloum Naba goes to the residence of the Mogho Naba for the koaga. Only the Zusobin-Kassanga (chief eunuch) and the Sogon'kassanga (ranking servitor) assist at this performance. The koaga is a sort of earthenware basin into which is put a bit of fire and ... mystery. The head servitor places the koaga in the courtyard in front of the antechamber and blows on the fire, which quickly blazes up and then dies down. Meanwhile, the bendré (drummer) has been rubbing his hand back and forth over the waxed portion of the drumhead.

During the whole performance, no one is allowed either to enter or leave the house of the Mogho Naba. Anyone coming from [687] the outside is not allowed to pass through the courtyard during the proceedings and anyone caught watching the koaga basgo was severely punished by the lash or even executed. When the performance is over, the Zusoba and the Baloum Naba, each of whom was seated at a particular place, arise, then approach and greet each other, and wait to be served some dam before separating for the rest of the night. They sometimes also salute the Mogho Naba before returning to their quarters.

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Ministers and Officials of the Court of the Mogho Naba

644 Ministers. (a) Ouidi Naba (literally, "chief of the horses,"
645 or superintendent of His Majesty's stables). In the old days the Ouidi Naba had the duty of choosing the color and kind of horse suitable for the Mogho Naba. He usually had charge of the horses of deceased chiefs.

202 If a kombéré (canton chief) owned horses during his lifetime,
644 upon his death one of them is sent to the Mogho Naba in Ouagadougou as bearer of the sad news. Branches of the tahnga (karite [or shea] tree), wound with white rope, are tied to the horse's tail.

[64] The horse thus presented to the Mogho Naba is then handed over to one of the representatives of the Ouidi Naba who, after cutting loose the branches with a knife and leaving them in the courtyard of the Mogho Naba, leads the animal to Ouidin [section of the Ouidi Naba].

Unless the Mogho Naba gives the horse to someone, the Ouidi Naba is free to dispose of it.

645 (b) Larrhallé Naba, second minister of the Mogho Naba. Formerly he accompanied the Tansoba or Tampsoba to war.

In the section where the Larrhallé Naba now lives, there were once enormous trees whose leaves were constantly astir. When he was made a minister, the Larrhallé Naba said that he wished to dwell at the place "where the leaves on the trees are always astir" (tisse vand'sin y a lag, lag zighin wan). From this came the name of Larrhallé, which designates the section.

(c) Gounga Naba, third minister (1). His section stands in a

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1. Originally the Gounga Naba was the prime minister, and the title was his by right since he was a companion of Naba Oubri. One day, as he was attending to a natural need, he met a very handsome young man and offered his friendship to him; the latter accepted. Later he presented the boy to Naba Oubri who adopted him, settled him at court, and put him in charge of the royal stables. The Gounga Naba then said

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to the Mogho Naba: "Since I have come to you, give the first rank to this man. I will show him what he must do to please you. He will be the Ouidi Naba."

A man from Tansobongo, having heard that the Ouidi Naba was living in the greatest ease, came to see him. He, too, was a handsome youth. He was presented to the Mogho Naba (Naba Oubri) by the Gounga Naba who proposed the young man's appointment as second minister, the Larrhallé Naba, and reserved for himself the post of third minister.

So it came about that the Gounga Naba is the emperor's third minister.

645 place where there were once many goumsé (gounga, silk-cotton tree); hence, his name.

[126] He is a brother-in-arms of the Tansoba and always accompanied him to war, where he chose death rather than defeat, especially if the Tansoba had been killed.

644 (d) Baloum Naba, the chief steward of the palace and chief servitor of the Mogho Naba. He never goes to war, but remains always at the side of the Mogho Naba. It is his duty to carry out

[181] [65] sacrifices, such as killing the chickens or livestock offered to the manes or to the spirits when such sacrifices are prescribed by the soothsayers or other charlatans for the health and well-being of the Mogho Naba.

(e) Kamsaogho Naba, formerly accompanied the Tansoba to

[839] war. The Kamsaogho Naba is a eunuch, and for this reason he is commonly called Mogho Naba na poug'tiéma, "first wife of the Mogho Naba."

Other personages (not ministers). (a) Samandé Naba, in charge of all of the people in the outer courtyard of the Mogho Naba and a brother-in-arms of the Larrhallé Naba.

644 (b) Poé Naba, formerly the confessor for the wives and pages
687 of the Mogho Naba. His duty, carried out by magical practices,
661 was to denounce those wives or persons guilty of treason or of

443 Ready-made clothing, beads. No tax collected.
651 [82] Soumbala (kalgo in Mossi) [locust beans pressed into balls]. Payment in kind (one ball per seller).

Other spices. No fee paid.

Karite [shea] butter. Collected with a soutga (a kind of ladle), karite butter was used almost exclusively for the horses of the Mogho Naba.

Fritters and other cooked foods. Actually no fee was called for on these products, but the collectors demanded the payment of a tax in kind to provide their own food or that of the samand'kamba (servitors of the outer courtyard).

Salt. 300 cowries for each load (ox or donkey).

Hoes, axes. Each merchant provided a daba or an axe for work in the field of the naba. Nothing was collected at the subsequent market if all of the tools had not been sold in one day.

Jewelry. No tax was collected. The jewelers who made [306] bracelets and other jewels for the wives of the naba, as well as various harness parts, were exempt from all taxes.

Other markets. Fees collected for the benefit of the canton chiefs were about the same as [83] those paid at the market of Ouagadougou. In small markets, however, payments were made in kind. The edible products made up the food of the collectors, Gourounsi captives for the most part, who were prevented by their social status from having wives and so had no one to prepare food for them.

Chapter 5

Slavery Among the Mossi

567 We shall endeavor in the following lines to describe slavery as it existed among the Mossi before the French occupation.

567 We know that slavery has existed for a very long time in the
● 173 land of the Mogho Naba, but, because of the total lack of dates in Mossi history -- handed down from generation to generation by the griot [heralds, drummers] of the naba -- it is difficult to determine when it was first introduced.

567 It is known, however, that the first slaves of the Mossi were all of Boussanga [Busansi] origin. The canton of Garango in what is

769 they return to their homes.

796 The Bend'Naba and other drummers remain in the courtyard un-
533 til the Sogon' kassanga (chief eunuch) bring to them, on behalf of the emperor, the sum of 10,000 cowries and some beer. In the old days a young captive, seated amidst the cowries, accompanied these gifts. The messengers say to the drummers: "Nab'yet b'wa poustabo (the king sends us to give you these gifts on the occasion of his basgha)."

The chief of the drummers pours a drink for the Zussoba and orders his followers to play together "Tompaongo, Wend'kaouss'Naba nioré, Wenna wilig'vinré" (literally, "We thank the king for his gifts. May God give the Mogho Naba long life and allow us to come back to play here next year").

Before sending them away, the Mogho Naba is obligated to give a karfo (black robe [158] imported by the Haoussa) to the Bend' Naba and a robe to the Loun Naba (chief of the luinsé). Water with flour in it is likewise brought to the Bend'Naba, and he scatters it about the courtyard. The emperor is required by custom to walk upon this water of gnimassem (of good health) as he goes back to his apartments.

When all these formalities have been completed, the Bend'Naba, accompanied by his bards, takes his leave. The festival is over.
[431] On the days following, the drummers call on the ministers and the other court dignitaries and are given many gifts (cowries and livestock).

All of these gifts are retained by the Bend'Naba or by someone chosen by him, and they are distributed later, with due regard for the hierarchy existing among the griot. The share of the older men is always greater than that accorded to the younger ones. [159]

Chapter 10

The Wives of the Naba. The sogoné. The Pogsioure

Naba Warga and the Origin of the Sogoné

173 Naba Warga was constantly at war with the Riziam Naba, who
644 was called Mamzi (which means "I myself do not know"). He had
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173 644 351 to be on the field of battle himself and for five years was unable to vanquish his enemy who was entrenched on a mountain and well supported by the local inhabitants.

After Warga had tried every means at his command to conquer his enemy, he hacked down the crops, which were almost ripe, and captured all the livestock that ventured down the mountain. In short, he devastated the country.

This succeeded so well that at last the local inhabitants, faced with famine, had to choose between the life of the chief they were sheltering and their own lives. Mamzi was therefore handed over and imprisoned at Saponé (1).

1. The principal canton town in the district of Ouagadougou.

During the five years of this difficult campaign, Naba Warga, aside from the warriors, had only a young boy to serve him since his wives were not present. The boy served as cook [160] and personal servant. In short, he performed the duties of a wife so well that Warga decided that he was worthy of some notice and decided to reward him.

When he had returned to his lands, he freed this faithful servitor after first giving him a wife. Then it occurred to him that several children in his court could perform the same services. He therefore ordered them to be recruited on a large scale, and these were the sogoné.

357 644 Every boy recruited to become a sogoné can expect to be given a wife, however little she may be worth, when he is freed.

[554 304] The sogoné have the same standing as the napagba[*] and they wear the same ornaments. A group of bracelets worn on the wrists, in fact, distinguish the napagba and the sogoné from free women.

It is their duty to serve the naba. They form a half circle around the naba when he appears; they accompany him on his short outings; and they carry the scepter and all of the insignia of chiefdom. They serve drinks to the naba, fan him when he takes a nap [293] with fans called fika, make his bed, and do various errands. Likewise a naba never sends anyone but a sogoné to take a message to his wives.

*[i.e. royal wives — Analyst]

/4/ BOOK I. POLITICAL LIFE

Chapter 1. The Country and Its Inhabitants

142 Although the Mossi is not a handsome type of Black, there is nothing disagreeable about him. He is rather tall, with lively eyes, woolly hair, flat nose, occasionally rather fine features, lips which are broad without being too thick, and cheeks heavily marked with three parallel lines running from the temples to the chin and a fourth leading perpendicularly from the nose to the other three. His limbs are muscular, and his color neither ebony nor copper but an intermediate hue.

291 He acquires a truly attractive and resolute air when he dresses in festive clothes, with his broad, dark blue, Zouave-like trousers, his loose shirt made of white and blue fabric strips which falls lightly over the arms, and on the right shoulder his doré, a weapon consisting 411 of a slightly bent iron rod, flattened at one end and terminating at the other in a ring hafted perpendicularly to a short stick. His wrist [301] is often adorned with a copper bracelet, and he nearly always carries at his waist a stiff knife, enclosed in a leather sheath which ends in a tuft of leather strips with cowries attached to them. He wears a 291 cap made of two diamond-shaped pieces of colored fabric half-sewn together; the two free ends may serve to cover the ears and cheeks, but are usually worn raised in the shape of a tiara. A great fighter, he wields the knife with dexterity or strikes with the doré which can become a dangerous club.

• 173 The Mossi are a conquering people. They have not always lived in the territory they now occupy. But where did they come from? 648 The elders questioned all say that their people came from Gambaga 643 (British Gold Coast), and this is why the Moro Naba Wobro took refuge in Gambaga when he was dethroned by the French conquest; this is also why the naba of Gambaga is notified whenever a Moro Naba dies, and why the shoes, cap, and scepter of command of the deceased are sent to him as gifts to be laid on the ancestral tomb. Gifts are also sent to the naba of Fada N'Gourma, which the Mossi call "Bingo." When the Moro Naba dies, his bow and quiver are presented to the

173 chief of Fada along with his two best horses, saddled, his two youngest
618 wives, twelve head of cattle, one captive, and three bars of salt.
[643] When the naba of Fada dies, however, nothing is sent to the Moro Naba, but his best horse is sent to the chief of Gambaga.

There has been contact, therefore, between the Gourmantché /Gurma/ of Fada, the Mossi, and the Dagomse /Dagomba/ of Gambaga. The Gourmantché claim that they come from Bornu. The first naba of Fada was a slave of the naba of Bornu. The Gourmantché formerly ruled the area as far as Dori. The Peul /Fulani/ came and chased them from the region after a long war. The Gourmantché, however, did not fight either the people of Gambaga or the Mossi. If they ever fought the latter, it was in the course of civil wars; the naba of Fada requested the Mossi to help him against his own subjects.

/5/ This is how the Mossi tell of the conquest of the territory. A
173 daughter of the chief of Gambaga, called Yennenga, had a son by the hunter Riala. This son was given the name Weddaogo. His son, Zougourana, seized Tenkodogo and settled there; in his turn Zougourana's son, Naba Oubri, seized the Ouagadougou area and became master of the whole country. The eldest son of Yennenga had seized Fada and founded the present dynasty, but had been unable to impose his language or his tattoing patterns on the inhabitants. This explains the gifts sent to Gambaga, the cradle of the race, and to the naba of Fada, the eldest son of the family. Part of the autochtonous inhabitants, driven away by the Mossi invasion, withdrew to the southeast and became the Bousansé /Busansi/ and the Gourounsi; the other part, remaining in the country, were assimilated by the Mossi and learned the tongue of their conquerors. A son of Naba Oubri, Naba Namendé, seized Bélousa and its territory.

In the meantime, the naba of Tenkodogo died, leaving only one son who succeeded him. His family requested the naba of Bélousa to give them his own son, who became Kourita, representative after death, of the deceased naba of Tenkodogo. Kourita wished to return to his father in Bélousa, but the latter sent him word not to do so, and Kourita stopped at Zaoré, a day's march from Bélousa, where his immediate successors resided. It was only later that this dynasty came to settle in Koupéla, after defeating and expelling, with the help of the naba of Bélousa, the descendants of Naba Guigma who had settled in Gobro near Soulgou. This is how the province of Koupéla originated, and this is why the naba of Koupéla must be invested by his overlord, the naba of Bélousa.

173 While these events occurred in the east, a sister of the Moro Naba, assigned to guard the tibo fetishes, quarreled with her brother and fled west to Ouahigouya. This region thus became Mossi territory and took the name of land of Ya. (2)

2. For further details, see Lt. Marc. op. cit. Ch. 7, and especially Delafosse, Haut Sénégal et Niger /Upper Senegal and Niger/, Series I, Vol. 2, p. 305 ff.

131 The region thus conquered lies within the bend of the Niger, approximately between the 11°30 and 13°30 parallels and from 2° to 5° longitude west of Paris. Its closest neighbors are the Macina and the Habé to the north, the Samo to the northwest, the Gourounsi to the west and southwest, the Nancana /Nankana/ to the south, the Bousansé to the southeast, the Gourmantché to the east, and the Peul of Dori to the northeast. The Mossi population has been estimated at 161 one and a half million, to which must be added the Yarsé, who are Mandé completely assimilated to the Mossi, the pastoral Peul, the Haoussa /Hausa/ who form small colonies near the large commercial centers of the region, and a few lesser groups. We shall deal with these populations only insofar as they have contact with the Mossi, in whose territory they are scattered.

133 Two important rivers cross the country from northwest [Tr., the original reads northeast] to southeast. They are the two Volta rivers, the White and the Red. In addition to these two larger waterways, which nevertheless do not flow throughout the year, there are a large number of watercourses /Tr., the French term, marigot, covers both river branch channels and shallow depressions where water accumulates forming pools/. They become impassable torrents after a storm, /6/ but remain empty during the dry season from November to June. The 312 shallow wells which supply water for the households are usually dug by the women in the beds of these watercourses.

There are no high mountains in Mossi country. When arriving from the north, the traveller crosses the beautiful cliffs of Bandiagara and the mountainous country of the Habe. /Two photographs appear here./ Mossi country begins almost at the foot of the cliffs. The northwestern region is, however, quite broken and includes the Pilimpikou peak; the two Volta rivers, especially the White Volta,

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2. One may wonder whether the Bariba were not part of this Mossi or pre-Mossi migration, since the Bariba have certain points of resemblance, from a sociological viewpoint, with the Mossi: like the Mossi, they are warrior-horsemen, pillagers, and courageous. On the other hand, Delafosse (Vocabulaires comparatifs /Comparative Vocabularies/) wonders, on page 224, if one should not connect the Bariba to the Mossi-Gourounsi, from a linguistic viewpoint.

173

Also, Captain Lambert says in a note on page 170: "The leader of Djougou (Dahomey) is of Mossi origin. Tradition claims that the inhabitants of this village, divided by internal strife brought about by the rivalry of several pretenders to power, offered the leadership to a weaver who had been living for a long time in Djougou where he most certainly kept out of local squabbles; the latter refused the offer. But the people of Djougou refused to give up and made him a prisoner in his hut. Having to choose between the disadvantages of power and his own captivity, the weaver could not but make a decision; at the end of the sixth day, he consented to take command. His descendants have succeeded him since that time without interruption, and, in memory of the incident described, a custom was set up which requires that the new leader remain enclosed in his hut for the six days following his election."

174 as far as Gambakha, the present-day capital of the northern territories /6/ of the English colony of the Gold Coast. This is where the leader who had organized the exodus chose his residence. We have no positive information about him as a person, but it is certain that the establishment of the Mampoursi and Dagomba kingdom can be traced to him or his immediate successors."

174 Captain Lambert adds in a note: "According to Colonel M.-P. Northcott, the founder of the Gambakha dynasty was called Tosogo; but the information that he provides about him seems hardly in agreement with the tradition we are relying upon here." (See Report on the Northern Territories of the Gold-Coast, London, 1890).

Captain Lambert continues as follows:

"The creation of the actual Mossi empire came later; it is nevertheless safe to assert that from that period on, some of the new inhabitants of Mampoursi undertook to open a passage toward the north and achieved it in two different ways. One group, after leaving Gambakha, pushed the Boussanga back into the region they occupy today and reached Béloussa country where they spread toward the west and north, occupying a vast stretch of land which is today almost exclusively inhabited by the Mossi. The other group, blazing a path in Nankana country, went north of Tiébélé and pushed the Boussanga back from the opposite side, thus crushing them in a vice, so to speak, and spread out in the country circumscribed by the Red Volta, toward Ouagadougou.

"One has only to glance at a map of the Mossi country to recognize the direction of these two parallel movements which came together north of the present-day Boussangsé, an almost uninhabited region at the time of the great Mossi migration. It was there that the autochthonous Boussanga, who were then occupying the whole Tenkodogo country, were forced to find refuge and have since been just existing, hostile to any fusion with the invader."

173 Captain Lambert then goes on to the legend of the origins of the true Mossi empire:

"A naba of the Gambakha (the Gambakha, as we have seen, were directly descended from the leader who had led the great immigration to the Mampoursi River), having reached the end of his life without an heir, believed this fact to be a fulfillment of destiny. Nothing in this world is permanent, and doubtless his glorious dynasty had to make way for a new line of leaders. He was at least resigned to this, but his lonely old age was what saddened him above all else. He therefore implored the spirits to give him a child, pronouncing the solemn vow that he would dedicate it to virginity, whether it be a boy or girl. As if by a miracle, a girl was born to him at once. He called her Pogotoenga (woman of the tree) (1), considering her, therefore, from

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1. Pogotoenga, or rather Pogotoéga, means "woman of the baobab," and comes from pogo, meaning "woman," and toéga, meaning "baobab" /a species of tree/. One may wonder what relation there is between this name and the fact that Pogotoenga was dedicated to virginity, if one ignores the customs of the Sudanese. A woman dedicated
588 to a baobab (a powerful vegetal divinity) is considered the spouse of the baobab. Therefore, she cannot enter into marriage with a man, which means forced celibacy. It is true that certain Blacks (for instance, the Dialonké of the Faranah circle, French Guinea) consider that a woman married to a spirit owes him only her spirit or spiritual form, and that her material body is free. From this arises the fact that with those Blacks, and some others as well, women-fetishes, women married to spirits or divinities, are actually prostitutes and practice prostitution. They are, besides, very rare.
[786] In short, they are allowed to prostitute themselves but not to marry. It is sacred prostitution, well known to the whole of oriental and Greco-Roman antiquity. Thus, virginity (sacred), on the one hand, and prostitution (sacred), on the other, are rather strangely derived from the same order of ideas.

173 her birth as being a stranger to her sex, and he had her given masculine clothes.

"Pogotoenga developed quickly. At the age of ten, she reached a degree of incomparable beauty, and at about the same period, torn by the ardors of puberty, she succeeded--despite the strict vigilance of the old man, anxious to remain faithful to his oath--in fleeing the paternal household.

Although pursued for a long time, she managed to evade all /8/ attempts at capturing her, until the day when, wandering in what is

173 today the Tenkodogo country, she met, in the midst of the bush, the elephant hunter Rialé, a lonely and violent man who seduced her. She had a son, Widiraogo, and a daughter, Wedaogo, by Rialé. (1)

1. In other legends (see my Noir du Yatenga /Blacks of Yatenga/, p. 58) Pogotoenga is called Yennenga, or simply Poko (woman). As far as the name Ouidiraogo or Widiraogo is concerned, it means male horse, stallion. I do not know exactly what the name Wedaogo or Ouédaogo means, but it seems to me to be unsuitable for a girl, since it contains the word daogo or raogo which means "male" in Mossi.

"In order that the quality of royal blood inherited by these children not be debased by exogamy, Rialé and Pogotoenga decided to marry them to each other, and from this marriage were born also a boy and a girl, Zunghrama (2) and Yuganemdo. For the same reason,

2. This is the Zoungourana of the Moulins-Carrier and Vadier legends (See my Noir du Yatenga, p. 60).

Zunghrama married his sister (3), and from this union, three sons

3. The unions of brothers and sisters are not indicated in the other variations of the legend.

were born: Oubri, Oubrogo, and Yampango. Oubri was to found the dynasty of Ouagadougou; Oubrogo, that of Tenkodogo; and Yampango, that of Gourma (4). Oubri's offspring were the most glorious and the

4. The Moulins-Carrier and Vadier variations present things somewhat differently. Zoungourana is supposed to have founded the Tenkodogo dynasty himself; his brother, Diaba, is supposed to

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have founded the Fada-N'Gourma dynasty; and Rawa, his eldest brother (in Mossi, "Rawa" means the courageous, the strong), is supposed to have founded the Rawatenga dynasty which has since become the Yatenga. As for the Ouagadougou dynasty, it was indeed Oubri, son of Zoungourana, who is said to have founded it. On this last point, all the traditions are in agreement, the one on which Captain Lambert bases his theories, as well as those of Moulins and Vadier.

[631] most powerful. The relations between the naba of Ouagadougou and those of Tenkodogo and Gourma, their cousins, were always those of a sovereign to his vassal (5).

5. It is unlikely that this situation prevailed from the beginning, since the higher authority should have been that of the Tenkodogo naba. But when the Mossi kingdom of Ouagadougou subsequently became the more powerful, it established its primacy over the neighboring, less powerful kingdoms of Tenkodogo and Fada-N'Gourma.

"Their common ancestor, Zunghrama, died in Komtoéga, where his grave is still shown."

174 In conclusion, Captain Lambert states:

1. That the Mossi come from south of Bornu, an area still inhabited by a people, the Mossah, who greatly resemble them. /9/

2. That the Mossi went through Haoussa and Djerma in order to come to Dagomba.

3. That the Mossi of today come from those of Dagomba.

He also states, but we can ignore this claim as being absolutely contrary to the facts known to us today, that the journey from Djerma to Dagomba was made during or after the sixteenth century A. D. and was occasioned by the crusades that the second Songhaï empire

174 led against the Mossi. In fact, the Mossi had left Dagomba long before the fourteenth century and occupied their present sites, including Yatenga.

● 173 Dr. Ruelle as well admits that the Mossi came from the east before settling in Dagomba. "The same tradition," he says (1), "has

1. L'Anthropologie /Anthropology/, Vol. XV (1904), p. 675. The tradition mentioned refers to the tradition of the old people.

it that warriors who came from the east defeated at Gambakha the Dagomba tribe who was them master of the land, and they set up their own leader. His daughter, Ouiaraouga, fell in love with an elephant hunter with whom she ran away, and, as her father tried to apprehend her, she took refuge in Tenkodogo. There she married the local chief, a Boussanga called Zangoumana, whose grave in Komterga is still a place of pilgrimage for the Mossi. Their son, Bougoum, after several expeditions in that region, conquered Koupéla. He, in turn, had three sons: Houbri, Nabakéré, and Kouda, all of whom made further conquests. The first pushed on as far as Yako, made Ouagadougou his capital, and forced his two brothers to recognize him as suzerain." (2).

2. I quote this version which is somewhat different from the others and which also has some mistakes since the name of "Ouiaraouga" (Ouidiraogo, "stallion, male horse") is given to the young girl whom the other traditions call Poko, Pokotoéga, Yennenga, etc. The name rightfully belongs to her son and not to her. It should be noted that Zoungourana (or Zangoumana) here becomes a Boussanga, the second husband of the ex-maiden, daughter of the king of Dagomba.

174 Lieutenant Marc also believes that the Mossi originated in the east. "Where did the Mossi come from when they arrived in the

174 country of Gambaga?" he asks (op. cit., p. 134). "It is rather difficult to /10/ speak authoritatively on this subject: probably from the central African Sudan, the region of the Chad. All Mossi traditions are unanimous in placing their country of origin very far in the east . . ."

Lieutenant Marc had already said on page 130, "Local traditions have it that the Mossi come from very far in the east. Very long ago, they occupied a country located beyond the Niger River, whose capital was called Aliaman. This country is presently inhabited by the Songhai. Then the Mossi came to live in Dagomba, defeated its inhabitants, and the leader of the Mossi settled in Gambaga." (1)

173 114

1. There follows the legend of the daughter of the king of Gambakha. She is wrongly called Ouidiraogo, "stallion," as in Dr. Ruelle's version. Lieutenant Marc goes on to make another mistake by saying that Ouidiraogo means "hoof" (instead of male horse). Zoungourana (whom Lieutenant Marc calls Zoungourouma or Zougourouma) is presented here, as he was by Dr. Ruelle, as the second husband of the daughter of the king of Gambakha and as a Boussansé king. In Lieutenant Marc's version, he "waged war against his father-in-law and conquered the whole country from Gambaga to Koupéla." Then "Zougourouma had three sons: Séré, Oubri, and Couda. The first became naba of Boussouma; the second, Naba Oubri, conquered the country of Ouagadougou, set up his capital there, and took possession of Yatenga. Naba Oubri is considered by the Mossi as the first of the Moro-naba and founder of the present dynasty. His successors were his brother Couda, and then his son Nigamenda."

174 In this tradition reported by Lieutenant Marc, there is obviously an element of Moslem imaginations; Aliaman probably designates

174 of reference given us by the chroniclers of Timbuktu or by the Portuguese. Once these chronologies have been set down, we shall be able to discuss them again with the help of an important bit of information which is given by the Tarikh-el-Fettach /History of Fetach/:

174 Mossi Kings 173	Delafosse's Chronology	Tauxier 1912	Tauxier 1917
Nédéga (Dagomba)	1000	"	1233
Riâlé	"	"	1253
Ouidiraogo	dead in 1050	"	1273 /17/
Rawa	11 century	"	1293
Oubri	1050-1090	1175-1199	1313
Ouemtanango	1130	"	1333
Yadega	1170	"	1353
Yaouloumfao	1200-1225	"	1360
Guéda	"	"	
Tounougoum	"	"	1360-1375
Possinga	"	"	
Nasségué	1320-1340	"	1375-1385
Somna	"	"	
Vanté-Baragouan	1350-1380	"	1385-1395
Bonga	1380-1410	"	1395-1415
Sougounoum	1410-1430	"	1415-1430
Kissoum	1430-1435	"	1430
Zangayella	1435-1460	"	1430-1450
Lanlasse	1460-1475	"	1450-1475
Nassodoba	1475-1500	"	1475-1505
Yamba	1500-1530	"	1505-1535
Niago	1530-1560	"	1535-1565
Parima	1560-1590	"	1565-1595
Koumpaougoum	1590-1620	"	1595-1625
Nabasséré	1620-1660	"	1625-1655
Toussourou	1660-1690	"	1655-1685
Sini	1690-1720	"	1685-1720
Pigo	1720-1739	"	1720-1739
Ouabégo	1739-1754	"	1739-1754
Kango	1754-1787	"	1754-1787
Sagha	1787-1803	"	1787-1803

174 Kaogo	1803-1806	"	1803-1306
173 Tougouri	1806-1822	"	1806-1822
Kom	1822-1825	"	1822-1825
Ragongo	1825-1831	"	1825-1831
Ridimba	1831	"	1831
Diogoré	1831-1834	"	1831-1834
Totébalobo	1834-1850	"	1834-1850
Yemdé	1850-1877	"	1850-1877
Sanoum	1877-1879	"	1877-1879
Noboga	1879-1884	"	1879-1884
Pigo II	1884-1885	"	1884-1885
Baogo	1885-1895	"	1885-1894
Bagaré	1895-1899	"	1894-1899
Liguidi	1899-1902	"	1899-1902
Koboga	since 1902	"	1902-1914

174 [174] First of all, we can note that there is, I think, a slight confusion in the beginning /18/ of Delafosse's chronology. As a matter of fact, he counts (Vol. I, page 306) 40 years per generation, and, on the other hand (Vol. II, page 126), he places Oubri approximately from 1050 to 1090. But Oubri was the son of Zoungourana, himself the son of Ouidiraogo, himself the son of the princess Yennenga, himself the son of Nédéga, the king who ruled in Dagomba. There are, then, four generations from Nédéga to Oubri, which must make 160 years, according to Delafosse's calculations, and, if Oubri is to be placed between 1050 and 1090, that would put his great-great-grandfather Nédéga at about 890, that is, at the end of the ninth century A. D., or at least in 910, that is, at the beginning of the tenth century (1).

1. I have already noted this in my Noir du Yatenga, p. 673 (Appendix No. IV).

In this last case, the approximate dates would be the following:

173 [173]

Nédéga.....about 910
Yennenga.....about 950
Ouidiraogo.....about 990
Zoungourana.....about 1030
Oubri..... between 1050 and 1090

174 we are counting from Za Alayaman to Issihak II, 58 Songhay princes, this dates the beginning of these princes at about the year 837 A. D.

On the other hand, we must be aware of the fact that we have the approximate date of Ali Kolon's reign (or Ali Kolen, or Ali Golom, or Ali Kilnou), who freed the Songhay from the Mali suzerainty a little after the reign of Kankan-Moussa and during that temporary period of weakness which enabled the Mossi to raid Timbuktu (1333). Delafosse (2) puts the flight of Ali Kolen from the court of the Mali

2. Haut-Sénégal-Niger /Upper Senegal and Niger/, Vol. II, p. 73.

king and his victorious defense against the pursuing Mali people in the year 1335. Before him, Binger (3) had dated this flight in the year

3. Du Niger au golfe de Guinée /From the Niger to the Gulf of Guinea/, Vol. II, p. 368. See also page 371.

1331, during the reign of the weak Magha I, successor of Kankan-Moussa who reigned from 1331 to 1335. We can take 1333 as an average date, and it is conceivable that the fall of Timbuktu to the Mossi, which occurred in that year, helped in the restoration of Songhaï independence.

174 /20/ On the basis of this data, we have:
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1.	Za Alayaman	837-849
2.	Zakoï	849-861
3.	Takoï	861-873
4.	Akoï	873-885
5.	Kou	885-897
6.	Ali Faï	897-909
7.	Biyaï Komaï	909-921
8.	Biyaï	921-933
9.	Karaï	933-945
10.	Yama-Karaouï'a	945-957
11.	Yama	957-969
12.	Yama-Danka-Kibao	969-981

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13.	Koukoraï'	981-993
14.	Kenken	993-1005
15.	Kosoï' (about 1009-1010)	1005-1025
16.	Kosaï'-Dariyâ	1025-1044
17.	Hen-Kon-Ouanko-Dam	1044-1063
18.	Biyaï-Koï'-Kimi	1063-1082
19.	Nintâsanaï'	1082-1101
20.	Biyaï'-Kaïna-Kimba	1101-1120
21.	Kaïna-Chinyounbo	1120-1139
22.	Tib	1139-1158
23.	Yama-Dao	1158-1177
24.	Fadazou	1177-1196
25.	Ali-Koro	1196-1215
26.	Bir-Foloko	1215-1235
27.	Yasiboï'	1235-1255
28.	Douro	1255-1275
29.	Zenko-Bâro	1275-1295
30.	Bisi-Bâro	1295-1315
31.	Bada	1325-1332
32.	Ali-Kolon (about 1333)	1333-1340
33.	Selman-Nâri	1340-1347
34.	Ibrahim Kabaï'	1347-1354
35.	Otsmân Kanafa	1354-1362
36.	Bar-Kaïna-Ankabi	1362-1370
37.	Mousa	1370-1378
38.	Bokar-Zonka	1378-1386
39.	Bokar-Dalla-Boyonbo	1386-1394
40.	Mar Kiraï'	1394-1402
41.	Mohammed Dâo	1402-1410
42.	Mohammed Koukiya	1410-1418
43.	Mohammed Fâr	1418-1426
44.	Karbifô	1426-1434
45.	Mar-Fâï-Kolli-Djimo	1434-1442
46.	Mar Arkena	1442-1449
47.	Mar Arandan	1449-1456
48.	Selimân Dam	1456-1464

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49.	Sonni Ali Ber	1464-1492
50.	Askia El-Hadj Mohammed	1493-1528
51.	Askia Moussa	1528-1531
52.	Askia Mohammed II	1531-1537
53.	Askia Ismaïl	1537-1539
54.	Askia Issihak I	1539-1549
55.	Askia Daoud	1549-1582
56.	Askia Mohammed III	1582-1586
57.	Askia Mohammed Bani	1586-1588
58.	Askia Issihak II	1588-1591

I underlined in this list the name of Bir Foloko (1215-1235), because he is the king of the Tarikh-es-Soudan list who corresponds to the Baraï of the Tarikh-el-Fettach list.

174 Concerning the dates which one can get from the Tarikh-el-Fettach, they consist of three notations:

1) A giant, originally from Yemen, who lived toward the middle of the fourth century of the Hegira (1), that is, counting 350 years

1. Tarikh-el-Fettach, Houdas and Delafosse translation, p. 329.

from the Hegira, around 961 A. D.

2) The date of conversion to Islam of the people of Gao which took place, according to El-Motaouakkel Kâti, between 471 and 475 of the Hegira, that is, between 1079 and 1082 A. D. (2)

2. Ibid., pp. 332-333.

3) And the date of Mâkara-Komsoû, who was contemporary with Kankan-Moussa's pilgrimage to Mecca in the year 720 of the Hegira, or 1321-22 A. D. (3) This Mâkara-Komsoû was the 33rd king of

3. Ibid., p. 335.

Songhay, according to the list given by Mahmoud Kâti.

174 On the basis of these three notations, a chronological list of the Songhay princes can be established in accordance with the Tarikh-el-Fettach, making a note of the fact that 360 years (961 to 1321) are given for 33 princes, which makes an average of approximately 11 years per prince. On the other hand, one is led to think that the date of the conversion to Islam of the people of Gao gives the date of Kotso-Moslem (Kotso the Mussulman) and that, therefore, we can place this prince at about 1079-82, that is, at approximately 1080. /22/ True, the Tarikh says that it was not Kotso-Moslem who converted the people of Gao to Islam and that the widespread general opinion about this matter is false, but Mahmoûd Kâti seems to mumble strangely (may I be forgiven the word) about the subject (1), and one

1. See the note of Houdas-Delafosse, p. 333.

can, despite his authority and following the general opinion he rejects, admit the fact that it was Kotso who Islamized both Gao and the Songhay kingdom. We thus arrive at the year 1080 for his period, which gives his predecessors nine years on the average until the giant from Yemen. Moreover, there and now, we can indicate all our reservations about this far too recent beginning of the Songhay empire. The date one obtains from the Tarikh-es-Soudan (837 A. D.) seems preferable by far to the date of 961, obtained from the Tarikh-el-Fettach.

174 173 Regardless of how the matter stands concerning this last topic, we have then:

1.	Giant from Yemen	961
2.	Ouaaï	970
3.	Kaïen	979
4.	Takaï	988
5.	Mata-Kaï	997
6.	Mali Biyaï	1006
7.	Bayaï Kima	1015
8.	Beï	1024
9.	Kiraï	1033
10.	Yama Kalaouaï	1042

174 11.	Yama-Dombo	1051
173 12.	Yama-Diamaa	1060
13.	Diatakoré	1070
14.	Koto-Moslem	1080
15.	Kotso-Dariâ	1093
16.	Hounabououa	1106
17.	Yama-Kitsi	1119
18.	Baraï'	1132
19.	Bibaï-Kaïna	1145
20.	Sémanbao	1158
21.	Fanda Diaoro	1171
22.	Yama-Daa	1184
23.	Arkour-Dioua	1197
24.	Baraï' (war with the Mossi)	1210
25.	Yassi Bo'o	1223 /23/
26.	Baro	1236
27.	Douro	1249
28.	Bitsi-Baro	1262
29.	Ali Golom	1275
30.	Silman Nari	1288
31.	Ibrahim Kabayao	1301
32.	Ousman Guifo	1311
33.	Mâkara Komsôu	1321-1322
34.	Boubakar	1335-1349
35.	Ankada	1349-1363
36.	Kimi-Yankoï'	1363-1377
37.	Baro del Yombo	1377-1390
38.	Madao	1390-1405
39.	Mohammed Koukiya	1405-1420
40.	Mohammed Fari	1420-1435
41.	Balam	1435-1450
42.	Souleïman-Dama	1450-1465
43.	Sonni-Ali-Ber	1465-1492

174 What is noticeable on this list (apart from the fact that this chronology brings the beginnings of the Songhaï' kingdom much too close to our time and that, on this point, the chronology drawn from the Tarikh-es-Soudan is preferable) is that Kotso-Moslem is placed

4: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1957
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against the Mossi in 1497 and defeated them, but he failed to make them embrace Islam. The Mossi and Songhoi fought several other wars until Songhoi power was broken by the Moroccans, who captured Timbuktu in 1590.[2]

The Mossi first came to the attention of the Europeans during the travels of Heinrich Barth, J. Dupuis, and Edward Bowdich, but the first European, G. A. Krause, did not enter Mossi country until 1888. Krause was followed six months later by Louis G. Binger, but the Mossi became suspicious and closed their territory to other Europeans. About 1894, one Ferguson, a British mulatto, safely arrived at Ouagadougou, the Mossi capital, and signed a treaty with the supreme Mossi ruler placing the area under British protection. The French arrived in the country in September 1896 and, refusing to honor the British treaty, conquered the Mossi and secured control of the country.

The Mossi traditional history goes back to about the eleventh century and is part of a tradition relating the origin of the Dagomba, Mamprussi, and Mossi peoples. The Mossi claim descent from Nyennega, the daughter of a Dagomba ruler, who fled from her father's home to marry a hunter by the name of Riallé. This man had left his father's country and was living in exile as a result of a quarrel over the chieftainship. The product of the union between Riallé and Nyennega was a son called Wedraogo in honor of the stallion that carried his mother to the north. At the age of fifteen the boy Wedraogo went back to the Dagomba to visit his grandfather and was given 4 horses and 50 cows. According to tradition, when Wedraogo left the Dagomba country to return north many Dagomba horsemen followed him, because their country was overcrowded. Wedraogo and his followers rode northward and conquered his father's people, the Boussansi, and decided to live in a place called Tankurn (Tengdodogo—old country). Here Wedraogo married a Boussansi woman called Pouiriketa, who bore him three sons. Diaba Lompo, the eldest, was sent out to rule Fada N'Gourma; another, called Rawa, was sent to rule a place called Zondema (now part of Yatenga); the youngest, Zoungrana, remained with his father at Tengkodogo.

Tradition states that the Boussansi were only one of a group of small but warlike peoples who inhabited this region. The others were the Ninisis, the Kibissi, and the Gourounsi. These groups were constantly at war with one another and they made frequent alliances with stronger peoples to fight their enemies. A Ninisi chief visited Tengkodogo and, seeing the strength of the Dagomba, sought an alliance with Wedraogo. The Ninisi chief sent Wedraogo a woman called Pouitenga as a wife for Zoungrana, Wedraogo's son. A few years later the Ninisi asked Wedraogo to come and rule their country, but he died at a place called Sagabtenga before he could establish complete control of their territory. Zoungrana succeeded his father as head of the Mossi (a new tribe resulting from the union of the Dagomba and the local inhabitants) but, wishing to remain at Tengkodogo, he sent his son Oubri to complete the conquest of the

4: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1957
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173 country. The Ninisi were happy to have Oubri as their sovereign since he was related to them through his mother. Oubri made war on the local inhabitants and subjugated or drove away those Ninisi, Kibissi, and Gourounsi who did not accept his rule.

Naba Oubri is regarded as the founder of the Ouagadougou dynasty, the most important of the dynasties issuing from the original Dagomba conquerer, Wedraogo. The Mossi rulers who succeeded him spent most of their lives subjugating the rest of the country; the sites of their graves are markers along the road of Mossi conquests. It was only after the reign of Naba Coibga, the fourteenth ruler, that the Mossi rulers were able to confine their activities to the capital at Ouagadougou. By the reign of Naba Warga, the twentieth ruler, ritual prevented the leader from leaving his capital. The country had become so centralized at this time that it was feared that civil strife would erupt if the sovereign left his capital.

The consolidation of the Mossi state seemed to have been a difficult task, and at various periods in its history some decentralization took place. During the reign of Komdimie, the fifth ruler, two of his relatives broke away from his control and formed principalities. The northern kingdom of Yatenga was created by a man called Yadiga, and the state of Riziam was founded by Kouda. Despite opposition and constant attacks by Komdimie the new states remained independent and Yatenga absorbed Zondema, the fief of Wedraogo's son. At this same period Komdimie allegedly gave the provinces of Boussouma, Yako, Conquisitenga, and La to his sons, who called themselves Dima, meaning "Submit only to God." Another province called Kayao broke away from Komdimie's control, and its sovereign took the title of Dima when the supreme ruler was unable to conquer him. Most of the Dimas established courts similar to that of the supreme ruler and performed similar functions, but they still recognized the supremacy of the Ouagadougou dynasty. Besides these small independent states ruled by the Dimas, there were the important independent entities of Tengkodogo, Fada N'Gourma, and Yatenga. The first two claimed independence from Ouagadougou because they were founded by the sons of Wedraogo, while Yatenga claimed independence by the right of revolt and by the subsequent absorption of Zondema. The rulers of these states were forbidden to see each other, or to see the Ouagadougou ruler on pain of death inflicted by their ancestors.

The traditions that describe how the Mossi rulers subjugated and controlled the country differ little from region to region. As the rulers conquered new areas they sent their sons, in company with the sons of their ministers, to command the new districts. When the country was finally conquered the new rulers sent their sons to rule districts taken away from the heirs of former rulers.

The people of Nobéré, the district in which this study was carried out, say that their first sovereign, Biligo, was heir to Oubri, but that he did not wish to rule over the Mossi. Biligo left Ouagadougou on a hunting expedi-

4: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1957
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tion and, when he arrived at the sparsely settled Ninisi village of Nobéré, he decided to stay and make it his home. The Ninisi ran away when they saw Biligo coming, but he persuaded them to return and live in peace under his command. The Tengsoba, or earth priest, of the village refused to return, and Biligo went into the bush and captured him so that the sacrifices to the earth shrines could continue as before. Biligo married a local woman and, when she bore him sons, he sent them to rule those villages not inhabited by the earth priests. These sons and their families formed the noble classes in the district.

About one hundred years ago a district chief called Peka supported the loser in a fight for the supreme chieftainship and was killed when the victorious pretender was installed as chief in Ouagadougou. The victor sent his son, Ngado, to rule over Nobéré and, although the relatives of Peka were scattered, the village chiefs were allowed to retain their posts. These chiefs did lose their noble status, however, because Ngádo's sons who went to live in the villages formed the new nobility. The chiefs and their families were submerged into the commoner class. The history of Nobéré is typical of that of most of the Mossi districts and, today, one finds the remnants of many former ruling lineages scattered around the country.

The supreme ruler of the Mossi was called the Moro-naba. He possessed the *nam* which is the symbol of power, and because of this power he had the right of life and death over all his subjects. He also had a religious role in the country because it was his duty to initiate the yearly rites dedicated to the ancestors so that the country would have good crops, and so that the people would be happy and multiply. The Moro-naba was aided in his rule over the Mossi by five ministers who were responsible for the five provinces grouping 333 villages that made up the territory of the state. These ministers were responsible for the proper administration of the state, and they nominally elected the new Moro-naba.

As soon as the death of the ruler was announced, civil disorder broke out throughout the country and continued until the five ministers and the minister for war took fictive control of the country. When the funeral of the late chief was completed the chief minister, the Ouidi-naba, summoned the lesser ministers to a conference and told them that the country had no chief "because the fire had gone out" and that it now required one. He advised them to consider the qualifications of the late chief's son and of all the other pretenders, and to choose the most worthy individual. The lesser ministers refused to do this, saying: "You are our superior, and the right to make the choice rests on you alone."

The eldest son of the former ruler was usually elected Moro-naba but, as any member of the royal lineage up to the third degree was eligible, many persons tried to bribe the elector. When the Ouidi-naba made his choice he told the minister of war: "My mind is not at ease because I fear that those whose hopes have not been fulfilled will resort to violence."

5: Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1959
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PETER B. HAMMOND

13. *Economic Change and Mossi Acculturation*

Some five thousand Mossi from the kingdom of Yatenga in the Upper Volta have been resettled on the newly developed lands of the Niger Irrigation Project in the French Sudan. Removed from a cultural setting which has been relatively undisturbed by the influence of European civilization, they are required to adapt themselves rapidly to an economic situation structured and directed by Europeans. Economic organization being the variable involved, a study of their adjustment provides an opportunity to examine some of the cultural problems and processes related to economic development in underdeveloped areas.

Yatenga is the northernmost of four Mossi kingdoms located in the Upper Volta. It is a sub-Saharan savanna land of red earth, low rainfall, gently rolling plains, and low hills. Ouahigouya, the capital, gives its name to the French administrative unit, the Cercle de Ouahigouya, which has governed the kingdom from its headquarters in this ancient city since its conquest in 1895.[1]

To distinguish themselves from the people of the neighboring kingdoms of Ouagadougou, Fada-N'Gourma, and Tenkodogo, the Mossi of the Yatenga sometimes speak of themselves as "Yadise" (those of Yadiga). This name refers to the fact that they regard themselves as being descended, as a nation, from Naba Yadiga, the half-mythical warrior-prince from Ouagadougou who broke away from his father's dynasty to form the separate political entity, Yatenga, which bears his name (*ya* for "Yadiga" and *tenga* for "country"). The Mossi have not always been numerically and culturally dominant in the Yatenga, as they are today. They recognize that their ancestors came from the south, from Mamprusi and Dagomba in the northern territories of Ghana.

Highly organized politico-religious states representing the cultural amalgamation of native and foreign populations and institutions are characteristic of the Voltaic region of West Africa. Acknowledging that we "owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes are

[1] Capitaine Noire, *Monographie du Cercle de Ouahigouya* (Ouahigouya, 1904), p. 15.

5: Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1959
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composed of two major groups of communities," Fortes goes on to describe this pattern succinctly:

> On the one side are those that claim to be descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants. . . . Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chieftainship similar to those of the Mamprusi. . . . The institution distinctive of the autochthonous communities is the office of "Custodian of the Earth." This ritual office, involving priestly functions in connection with the cult of the Earth, is found among many West African peoples from the Senegal to the mouth of the Niger. In the Voltaic region it is the exclusive prerogative of the autochthonous communities.[1]

The inhabitants of the Yatenga at the time of the arrival of the Mossi were the Kurumankobe, or Fulse, as they are called by the Mossi. Their descendants recognise their indigenous origin but have become almost wholly acculturated to the Mossi. While most Mossi bear the sib name Wedrsogo and maintain political control in the Yatenga, the descendants of the Kurumankobe usually have the sib name Savadogo and are excluded from the exercise of political authority. They have retained the custodianship of the earth, and the elders of their lineages and sibs are the Mossi's *Tenga Soba namba*, their "earth custodians," charged with propitiating the supernatural forces of nature.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The present king of the Yatenga, the *Yatenga Naba*, is a lineal descendant of the first ruler, Naba Yadiga. The members of the lineage of the king are called "those who maintain themselves upon us" (*riim nasaba*). Directly subordinate to the authority of the Yatenga Naba are his four grand ministers, each of whom has authority over a particular province (*solum*) of the Yatenga.[2]

The province over which each of the grand ministers presides as lord is divided up into a number of cantons (*tense*), each of which is ruled by a chief who is the central political authority both of the village in which he resides and of the villages within the canton. Like the province, the concept of the canton is not precisely territorial. Some villages may owe

[1] Meyer Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* (London: Oxford University Press, 1945), p. 6.

[2] These provinces refer not only to geographical areas of the kingdom but to particular categories of the population. For example, the *Balum Naba* has direct authority over the southern regions of the Yatenga and indirect authority over the cantons of Risiam and Zittenga, political entities which have never fully recognised the central authority of the *Yatenga Naba*. This same minister is also especially charged with maintaining liaison with certain of the more important earth custodians throughout the Yatenga.

161 has but 655,000 inhabitants, while our French Guinea has 1,400,000, the Yolof /Wolof/ group of the Senegal numbers only 400,000, etc.

144 At present the Mossi are a completely homogeneous group in terms of custom and language, but this homogeneity is a mere end result. The Mossi population of today derives from the fusion of a conquering group (the Mossi proper) with a conquered group that was probably related closely to the Habé, Kipirsi, Gourounsi /Grunshi/, Boussansé, etc.

173 Lieutenant Marc, who lived for many years among the Mossi and who published a book /Le pays Mossi (Mossi Country)/ on the region in 1909, which I have already mentioned /in section not translated/, has the following to say on the subject:

"Local traditions claim that the Mossi come from far to the east. A long time ago, they occupied a territory located beyond the Niger, whose capital was called Aliaman. It is said that this land is now occupied by a Songhay /Songhai/ population. Then the Mossi came and occupied Dagomba /Tamale/. They defeated the inhabitants of that land, and the chief of the Mossi settled in Gambaga. The daughter of the king of Gambaga, Ouidiraogo ("male horse" in Mossi), had an affair in the bush with a Dagomba elephant hunter called Samba. She became pregnant, and as her father wanted to have her put to death, she took refuge in Tenkodogo. There she married the king of the land, a Boussangsé named Zoungourouma, who waged war on his father-in-law and conquered the entire region from Gambaga to Koupéla. Zoungourouma had three sons, Séré, Oubri, and Kouda. The first became naba of Boussouma. The second, Naba Oubri, conquered the region of Ouagadougou, built his capital there, and seized the Yatenga territory. Naba Oubri is regarded by the /453/ Mossi as the first Moro Naba and the founder of the present dynasty. He was succeeded by his brother Couda, and then by his son Nigamenda. The Mossi trace back to Naba Oubri the present organization of Mossi country and attribute to him the division of the land into fiefs governed by his brothers and relatives. At present members of the royal families of Ouagadougou, Boussouma, Tenkodogo, Fada N'Gourma, and Gambaga are regarded as direct descendants of Naba Oubri and his brothers.

173 "The Mossi say that at the time of their arrival the land was occupied by savages who went naked and bore tattooings on their bellies. Those natives were named Suida. The Mossi claim that they chased the Habé into the mountains of Bandiagara and that the Habé, Kipirsi, and Boussangçé are the survivors of this autochtonous Suida group . . . .

"The traditions of the primitive groups driven off by the invaders agree rather closely with Mossi traditions. . . .

174 "In view of these traditions, it seems to us* that the Mossi, coming from far to the east, occupied those lands which are now Mampoursi /Mamprusi/ and Dagomba territories, with Gambaga as their capital, and then, from Gambaga, set out for the northwest and came to settle in the vast plains of the White Volta basin, where they still live. At the time of their arrival, the present Mossi country was inhabited by tribes which are now represented by the Boussangçé, the Gourounsi, and the Habé.

"It is probable that the Mossi owed part of their success to their cavalry. We believe that the Mossi were responsible for introducing the types of horses found at the present day in the Volta basin. Even today, all the Mossi love horses and are proud to own them, and no naba would deign to appear in public except on horseback. The Gourounsi, on the other hand, care little for horses. . . .

"Only part of the autochtonous inhabitants took refuge in the mountains or beyond the Red Volta. The remaining group was conquered and incorporated into the Mossi group, and adopted the Mossi language and customs /454/. This autochtonous population did not vanish without traces. In our opinion, it is to be credited with the religious organization of the Mossi." (Pages 130 to 134.)

173 Moulins, on the other hand, an official in charge of native affairs who lived among the Mossi from 1907 to 1909 and who wrote the Monographie /Monograph/ of the Ouagadougou circle in 1909, tells the story as follows:

"Tradition has it that some thirty-five generations ago, the king of Dagomba who lived in Gambakha had a daughter named Poko whom he allowed to grow in years and in beauty without attempting to find her a husband. This made the young girl so angry that she did not hesitate to run away from her paternal home on a horse she had found.

*[These passages are quoted from "Le Pays Mossi" of Lt. Mart, see p 2 —Analyst]

173 "She reached the area of present-day Yanga (Tenkodogo district), which was then occupied by a sparse group of Boussansé, and fell in love with an elephant hunter named Riare, by whom she had a son called Ouidiraogo (possibly in memory of the house on which Poko had fled Gambakha, for ouidiraogo means "male horse").

"When Ouidiraogo was about fifteen years old, Poko sent a messenger to Gambakha with the mission of telling the king of the Dagomba, "You did not want to give me in marriage, but God gave me a son whom I beg you to help." Then she sent Ouidiraogo to his grandfather, and the latter welcomed him and presented him with four horses and fifty head of cattle.

"At that time, the kingdom of the Dagomba was overpopulated. When Ouidiraogo returned to the Tenkodogo area, therefore, a large number of Dagomba threw in their lot with him and followed him. With this group, he founded a village which he named Tankourou on a site the Boussansé had abandoned when they saw him coming. This is present-day Tenkodogo.

"From that time onward, Ouidiraogo's power grew with the endless stream of Dagomba who came and gathered under his rule. The neighboring populations, on the other hand, were quite sparse and highly divided, and he was able to impose his authority upon them.

/455/ "Meanwhile, Ouidirago had married and given birth to numerous sons. When his boys grew up, he installed them as chiefs in the neighboring areas, especially in Fada N'Gourma, forcing his will by strength of arms upon those who were unwilling to submit.

"The area forming the present-day district of Ouagadougou was occupied at the time by Nymsi /Nioniosse/ and Gourounsi who lived side by side in a state of complete anarchy. The various villages acknowledged to a greater or lesser extent the authority of their chief, but although they were sometimes federated into cantons of a sort, they did not submit to any central power. As a result, incessant warfare and pillage prevailed among the villages.

"The chief of a group of Nymsi or Nioniossé which consisted of seven villages, the approximate equivalent of the present canton of Oubrytenga, dispatched a delegation to Ouidiraogo offering him one of his daughters in marriage. Ouidiraogo accepted the offer and

173 gave the girl to his son Zoungourana, who had by her a child named Oubry.

"A few years later a new delegation of Nioniossé came to greet Ouidiraogo and to ask him to take their country under his protection by placing it under the command of one of his sons. Ouidiraogo set out to the land of the Nioniossé to take possession of it, but in the course of this reconnaissance he died in the village of Saraboutenga. His son Zoungourana succeeded him and dispatched Oubry, who was about twelve years old at the time, to assume command of the Nioniossé. Oubry settled with his retinue in a village that took the name of Oubrytenga.

"During the initial years of his reign, on account of his youth, Oubry merely governed the region which had called upon him as its ruler. When he reached manhood, however, he prepared to extend the boundaries of his rule.

"A first detachment, sent to Gangado and Loumbila-Poko, procured the submission of the Boussouma and Béloussa regions. A second expedition, conducted to La, established Oubry's sovereignty in the Yako area.

/456/ "At that time, Zoungourana died. Oubry was his legitimate heir. Under the name of Moro Naba, he thus became chief of the Mossi and head of all branches of the reigning family. He left the administration of the Tenkodogo region to one of his brothers, but retained over it rights of suzerainty which subsisted until the time of the French occupation.

"Oubry's final expedition was aimed at Ouagadougou, where he waged a battle that lasted for five days. As a result, his authority was acknowledged as far as the Kipirsi. The Mossi empire was now established.

"Oubry died soon afterwards at Koudougou (Kipirsi) in the course of a journey through his new lands.

"When he died, not only had the conquest been carried out, but the political organization of the territory had already been firmly outlined. In order to facilitate the administration of his vast empire, Oubry had divided it into provinces, which were in turn subdivided into cantons, each of which contained a number of villages. A strong hierarchy prevailed among the various chiefs and converged on the Moro Naba, who thus centralized a considerable amount of power.

173 "This does not mean that nothing remained to be done by Oubry's successors. The land had been conquered, but remained to be explored and incorporated. The political organization had been outlined, but remained to be strengthened and completed.

"Up to the reign of Naba Kobra, fourteenth successor of Oubry, the Moro Nabas settled successively at various points of the empire instead of living generation after generation at Ouagadougou as they have done ever since. It would seem that in so doing they were attempting to strengthen their authority in regions where it was as yet insufficiently acknowledged.

"Whenever a territorial command became vacant, on the other hand, the Moro Nabas systematically filled it with a member of their own family. As a result, the whole land was soon in the hands of individuals who were united by bonds /457/ of kinship and who acknowledged the Moro Naba as the head of their family.

"Finally, thanks to marriages between Mossi, Nymsi, and Gourounsi individuals, the conquering element fused slowly with the initial population and eventually absorbed it almost completely.

174 "We have already seen that at the time of the Dagomba in-
444 vasion the territory that makes up the present district of Tenkodogo was inhabited by a Boussansé population, while the area covered by the present district of Ouagadougou was settled by Gourounsi and Nymsi or Nioniossé.

"The mixture of Dagomba with Boussansé, Nymsi and Gourounsi resulted in the Mossi element, which soon became the most important part of the population. As conquerors, indeed, the Dagomba married several women each, and the prohibitions governing kin marriages led them to seek their wives among the Boussansé, Nioniossé, and Gourounsi families. This is how they soon came to absorb the Autochtonous element, or at least the element that was already established in the area when they arrived.

"A few Nymsi families among the Mossi have avoided all intermixture, but their continuous contact with the Mossi has led them to adopt the latter's language and customs, and from a political standpoint there is no difference between the two groups."

174 From the two accounts of Marc and Moulins, the following broad facts may be gathered:

1. The Mossi, coming from the northwest, conquered the Dagomba at a time which is difficult to determine exactly, but which must not have long antedated their conquest of Mossi territory.

1/ [Passages quoted from the Monograph of the Ouagadougou circle in 1909" by Moulins.— Analyst.]

174 It must be said, however, as Marc points out, that the Mossi empire enjoyed a peaceful old age in the nineteenth century. The Toucouleur /Tukulor/ who conquered the Haoussa /Hausa/ territory with Othman /Usuman/ dan Fodio did not touch Mossi lands, and neither did El-Hadj-Omar who was detained in Macina territory by the Foulah /Fulani/. Toward the south, Samory went no farther than Boromo after conquering the Sudanese Ivory Coast. As for the forces of Djerma or Zaberma /Zerma/, they suffered a defeat in Kipirsi lands after their conquest of Gourounsi territories, that checked temporarily their march toward the north. They might later have nibbled at Mossi lands, but the French arrived precisely at that time. In short, the Mossi empire remained intact throughout the nineteenth century, though none the stronger for it, and crumbled at one blow in 1896 at the hand of a small French detachment.

173 174 We must add to this brief historical outline a list of the Moro Nabas who have succeeded one another since the time of Oubry. This list was borrowed from Moulins' Monographie du cercle de Ouagadougou /Monograph of the Ouagadougou Circle/.

1. Oubry, son of Zoungourana, grandson of Ouidiraogo, great-grandson of Poko. He lived at Oubrytenga.
2. Sorba, son of Oubry, who lived at Lougousi.
3. Nassekiemdé, brother of Sorba.
4. Nassébiri, brother of Sorba. He lived at La.
5. Ningnom, brother of the preceding.
6. Koundoumié, son of the preceding. He lived at Tiou.
7. Kouda, son of the preceding. He lived at Saponé.
8. Dawoéma, son of the preceding. He lived at Loumbila.
9. Zettembousma, brother of the preceding.
10. Nandieffo, son of the preceding. He lived at Ouagadougou.

If the reign of Naba Oubry is set around 1175 A.D., a period of 721 years is obtained up to the time of Bokary Koutou, thirtieth Moro Naba, who ruled in 1896. This yields an average reign of 24 years for each Moro Naba. If these figures are applied to the first ten Moro Nabas, it means that Kida would have reigned from 1463 /462/ to 1487. He would have been the one to invade the second Songhay empire in 1483 and to be driven back by Sonni-Ali.

113 11. Nattia, son of the preceding. He lived at Dazouli.
174 12. Namoëro, son of the preceding.
13. Kida, brother of Nattia. He lived at Ouagadougou.
14. Kimba, brother of the preceding. He lived at the same place.
15. Kobra, son of the preceding. He lived at Uougandé.
16. Sana, son of the preceding. He lived at Ouagadougou, where all his successors resided up to the present day.
17. Guiliga, son of the preceding.
18. Oubia, brother of the preceding.
19. Mottaba, son of the preceding.
20. Ouarga, brother of the preceding.
21. Zombéré, son of the preceding.
22. Kom, son of the preceding.
23. Sagha, son of the preceding.
24. Koulougou, son of the preceding.
25. Savadoro, son of the preceding.
26. Karfo, son of Savadoro.
27. Baoro, brother of Savadoro.
28. Koutou, son of the preceding.
29. Sanom, son of Koutou.
30. Boukary /sic/ Koutou, son of Koutou.
It was Bokary Koutou who was dethroned by Lt. Voulet in 1896.
31. Kouka (Siguiri) with whom Lt. Voulet signed a treaty whereby Mossi territory was placed under the suzerainty of France
32. Kom, the present Moro Naba (1910).

648 As may be seen, therefore, the Moro Nabas continue to exist among the Mossi. France even provides them with a pension, which first amounted to 25,000 francs a year and has since been lowered to 18,000 francs. They no longer hold any powers, however, and they do nothing whatever.

115 I have found in the Monographie of the circle some interesting data on expeditions led by the Moro Nabas into Kipirsi territory, which always resisted Mossi conquest. Naba Koundoumié, sixth successor of Oubry, /463/ first led a bloody expedition to Kayao and Tiou. Naba Dawoéma, eighth successor of Oubry, waged war to the north of Yako. Naba Ouarga, twentieth successor of Oubry, settled

644 who will make him into a sorone if he is a boy, or alone have the right to give her in marriage if she is a girl."

643 Moulins also provides interesting details on the manner in which the Moro Naba spends his days, or rather spent them in the past, for this description refers to the state of affairs prior to the French occupation.

"From Ouarga's reign onward, the Moro Nabas, who had previously resided successively in various parts of the empire, settled at Ouagadougou where they have lived ever since. Custom constrains them never to leave /571/ the capital except in unusually serious circumstances. This is because the land falls into anarchy [674 when the sovereign is absent from Ouagadougou. All theft, pillage, 696] and murder committed at that time remain unprosecuted.

644 "Every morning at seven, the Moro Naba emerges from his hut. 173 His saddled horse waits before the door. He mounts it and pretends to set out on his way, but after riding around his hut he dismounts and goes back into his hut only to come out again immediately.

"This formality of the protocol has the following origin. A long time ago the favorite wife of the Moro Naba having fled to La, the sovereign wished to go and fetch her himself. He mounted his horse and was about to leave when all the court dignitaries rushed to him, admonishing him not to carry out his project, for his absence from Ouagadougou could only result in anarchy. The monarch gave way, and soon afterwards his wife returned of her own accord. It is in memory of the magnanimity of this sovereign, who sacrificed himself in the interests of his people, that every morning since that time the Moro Naba has pretended to prepare for departure and to then give up his plan.

644 "Following this ceremony, the Moro Naba settles himself in a recess sunk into the wall that surrounds his residence, and then, to the strains of abundant music, the whole court comes to the sovereign and prostrates itself before him, brow in the dust, forearms striking the ground in rhythm with a great clicking of bracelets. Then business is attended to.

"First, the five province chiefs come forward in order of precedence, relate to the Moro Naba those events which have taken place since the preceding day, and receive his instructions for the day. Then they present to him the canton and village chiefs and the common natives who wish for an audience.

8: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1958
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Christianity and Islam among the Mossi[1]

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797 THE twin forces of Christianity and Islam are both seriously contending for the conversion of the pagan masses of the Western Sudan. Islam first penetrated this region during the 11th century and succeeded in converting many people to its faith. Christianity arrived on the scene only 60 years ago, and has not had the time to win many converts. However, there remained many societies in this area which were largely pagan until European conquests exposed them almost simultaneously to the influences of both Christianity and Islam. One such society, the Mossi, has been described as the principal island of resistance to Islam in the Sudan (Gouilly 1952:52). André (1924:31) states that the Mossi "offered to the Animists an irreducible rampart against the invasion of Islam." And Delafosse concurs that the Mossi "seem to have been particularly hostile to Islam which has made no progress among them since the Hegira. And although an appreciable number of Moslem strangers (Yarsé) lived among them, they have almost all remained pagans" (1912, vol. 3:187).

The first Christian Catholic missionaries arrived in Mossi territory in 1900, just four years after French conquest. These missionaries were kindly if fearfully received by the people, who gave them land for building a mission and for cultivating crops. The Mossi helped the Christians cultivate these crops and willingly allowed the children to attend the mission school. Nevertheless, when the missionaries tried to convert the children to Catholicism, the parents objected and withdrew the children from school (Socquet 1956:62). The Protestant American "Assemblies of God" mission first worked among the Mossi in 1926, and in 1931 they reported that the outlook for conversions was "hopeful" (Cooksey and McLeish 1931:215). But from 1926 to date, the Protestants have made negligible progress in their conversions. There are today about 155,000 Moslems, 26,000 Catholics, and 1,760 Protestants in a Mossi population of over 1,500,000. These figures attest to the fact that despite a long history of resistance to foreign religious systems, many Mossi are now abandoning their traditional religion. But the figures also show that while Islam is gaining many converts, the Catholics are making only slight progress, and the American Protestants hardly any at all. There are obviously many reasons for the differential advance of these three religious systems. In this paper I will examine and analyze the processes by which these religious systems attempt to gain converts, and delineate the reasons for their differential success.

173 105 [186] The Mossi who are now feeling the impact of external religious influences represent the unique example of a Sudanese group which has preserved its ethnic identity and political autonomy through all the vicissitudes of Sudanic history until French conquest in 1896. Tradition records that the first Mossi

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rulers left the Dagomba region in the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana) during the 11th century and moved into the bend of the Niger River, carving out three large kingdoms and smaller principalities in the process. At the head of these still extant kingdoms are rulers (*Moro Nabas*) who hold feudal-like control of the provinces, districts, and villages which comprise their domains. A complex hierarchical administrative apparatus extends the power of the rulers into the smallest village, and funnels taxes and tribute back to them. French conquest modified this highly efficient system but did not greatly change it. The Mossi state apparatus rests on an economy which produces cotton cloth, horses, sheep, cattle, and goats, but the main support of this large population—one of the densest in the Sudan—is grain agriculture. Today, some Mossi districts still have as many as 70 persons per square mile.

The Mossi are divided into stratified royal, noble, and commoner patrilineages. Characteristic of this lineage system is a process by which royal sublineages descend serially until they merge with the mass of commoner lineages. Below the lineages there were once large non-Mossi groups of serfs and slaves, but these people have now been grouped into lineages and have become Mossi. Patrilocal polygynous extended family households, grouped into villages, form the basic Mossi settlement pattern. Marriages are arranged between unrelated persons through the agency of lineage members who establish "friendly" relationships. The two friends might ask their lineage heads for women to exchange as wives, or the "friend" who has received more gifts from his opposite number will give over a wife. Because only the older men have women and goods at their disposal, they are usually the ones who receive wives. The result is that most young men have no wives and must content themselves with occasional lovers until they inherit wives from lineage members. The Mossi have a great fear of incestuous relations which bring down the wrath of the ancestors (the *Keemsé*).

Ancestor veneration is at the core of Mossi religious behavior. The recent ancestors are notified, through sacrifices, of the important events in the lives of their descendants, and they are expected to aid in solving everyday problems. The ancestors also invoke their sanctions against antisocial behavior among their descendants. Once a year the Mossi people, in concert with the Moro Nabas, appeal to their individual and collective ancestors for good crops, large families, and for the preservation of the dynasty. Often associated with the ancestors as propitiatory agents are local deities called *Tengkougas* (sing. *Tenkougre*) or earth shrines, visibly manifested by clumps of trees, mountains, rocks, or rivers. *Tengsobas* or earth priests appeal to the Tengkougas on behalf of the local populations for help in sickness, for rain and good crops, and for children. When proper sacrifices are offered to the Tengkougas, their spiritual agents, called *kinkirsé*, enter the wombs of women and are born as children. Twins and children who die young are regarded as "evil" kinkirsé who entered a woman without being invited. Nevertheless, many persons consider twins as special gifts to parents in favor of the earth deities.

The earth itself, *Tenga*, is one of the principal deities of the Mossi. Tenga is

9:Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1960 FA28 Mossi FA28

during a period of transition to effective independence.

The Mossi have the unique distinction of having preserved their ethnic identity and political autonomy throughout all the vicissitudes of Sudanese history until conquered by the French on September 1, 1896. The origin of Mossi society is couched in mythological terms. According to their tradition they came from Dagomba in the Gold Coast (present day Ghana) sometime during the 11th or 12th century and moved northward towards the Niger River. During this migration they carved out three large kingdoms and many small principalities by conquering and absorbing some of the indigenous Ninisi and Foulse and Dogon populations, and by chasing the others into the cliffs of Bandiagara. In 1328, according to Es Sadi in the *Tarikh es Soudan*, the Mossi attacked, burned, and sacked Timbuktu, then held by Mali, and during the following century attacked Walata and Banku. They received their first setback by the Ali, and were severely beaten by Askia the Great, the usurper of the Songhoi throne, who lead a *jihad* against them in 1499. But their attacks into the Niger bend did not cease until the Moroccans became masters of Timbuktu sometime in the early 1590's. From that period until the French conquest, the Mossi remained relatively quiescent. They developed and maintained an economy based on grain cultivation, livestock rearing, cotton production, and trade between the forest zones and the desert. Their political system crystallized into a loose confederacy of fairly autonomous kingdoms and principalities, sometimes tribute to the Moro Naba, the ruler of Wagadougou.

Wagadougou, the most important Mossi political entity, was like the lesser kingdoms, pyramidal in political structure. At the top was and still is the Moro Naba, a lineal descendant of Wedraogo, the Dagomba conquerer who founded the Mossi group and Moro Naba Wubri, the first ruler of the Wagadougou dynasty. Paying allegiance to him, were the princes who ruled such autonomous provinces as Yako, Boulsa, Mane, Riziam, and Boussouma. These princes were all sons or near relatives of the early Moro Nabas. Directly under the Moro Naba were district chiefs who were descended from the cadet branches of the ruling family. The villages within the district were in turn ruled by the chiefs of the indigenous populations. In many of the villages,

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
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Tallensi chiefs and the Namoos clans are descended from the noble lineages of the Mamprusi kingdom, which at one time controlled Tallensi country. The chief of one of the Namoos clans reportedly told him, "We came from Mampurugu. . . . We have now become Talense; we no longer circumcise, because the local people would not marry us. The chief of Kurugu, our 'father,' still speaks Mampelle, but we no longer do so." The chief referred to is of course Fortes' Kuna'aba. Rattray adds that the Tallensi chiefs of the Namoos clans told him that they had to be sanctioned in office by the ruler of the Mamprusi at Naleregu.[11]

These data certainly suggest that prior to the arrival of the British, the Mamprusi were either incorporating Tale country into their kingdom or losing their hold on the Tallensi. Fortes' insistence on the acephalous nature of Tallensi society stems from his failure to consider that these people had been defeated and dispersed by the British at the turn of the century and had probably lost a great deal of their organization. The society he describes can be compared to a modern community arbitrarily divorced from its nation state. Such a community would have many of the truncated institutions and personnel of the state, but they would appear bizarre because they would lack the power normally derived from their national context. Moreover, to an investigator, the strictly local institutions would seem just as important as the truncated state institutions. His study would no doubt give a good synchronic picture of the community, but it would be incomplete because the diachronic dimension would be lacking. Fortes unfortunately gives us no idea of the relationship of the Tallensi to the Mamprusi, or of the cultural, historical, and especially the political processes in the region.

The origin of Mossi society lies buried in myths that not only sanction the power of the ruling families but support the political system with rich traditions of migrations and conquest. Traditional beliefs in the Voltaic area and among the Mossi themselves give a common origin for the Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Mossi peoples.[12] According to the most widespread Mossi belief, some forty generations ago a ruler called Naba Nedega (also known as Toese or Koulougbagha), who lived at Gambaga in present-day Ghana, reigned over the Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Nankana.[13] He had a daughter called Nyennega, whose warring skills he valued so highly that he would not grant her permission to marry. As a result, she fled Gambaga and rode toward the north, where she met and married a man called Rialle, who according to some traditions was the son of the Mali chief, and according to others was a Bussansi hunter. The couple had a son whom they

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173 named Ouedraogo ("Stallion") in honor of the horse that had carried Nyennega in her flight to the north.[14] A few years later, Nyennega sent Ouedraogo to Gambaga to visit her father, give him news of her marriage and of her family, and seek his aid.[15] Nedega welcomed the child and cared for him until he was ready to return to Busansi territory. As a farewell present, he gave Ouedraogo four horses and fifty cows. When he left Gambaga, the young man was accompanied by Dagomba horsemen who had seized the opportunity to leave their crowded homeland. With his troop of warriors, Ouedraogo skirted his father's village and invaded Tankourou (present-day Tenkodogo), from which the indigenous Busansi fled at his approach.

The Mossi bards relate that Ouedraogo and the Dagomba horsemen intermarried with the Busansi women, and that these unions gave rise to a new group of people called the Mossi. Ouedraogo himself married a woman named Pouriketa, who bore him three sons, Rawa, Diaba Lompo, and Zoungourana. Ouedraogo thus became known as the progenitor of the Mossi, and his mother, Nyennega, as their progenitrix. Other Dagomba horsemen subsequently arrived from Gambaga to swell the Mossi group. The Mossi then undertook to subdue neighboring peoples such as the Gurunsi (a large group including the Kasena, Sisala, and Nunuma), who lived to the east; the Ninisi, who were thinly scattered to the northwest in the vicinity of Ouagadougou; other large Ninisi, Foulse, and Habe (Tombo or Dogon) populations further north in Ouahigouya and extending northwestward to the Bandiagara cliffs; large Kipirsi populations northeast of Ouahigouya; and scattered Ninisi groups in Fada-N'Gourma east of Tenkodogo. Ouedraogo sent his son Diaba Lompo to conquer and rule over the Ninisi populations of Fada-N'Gourma.[16] Rawa, another son, was sent to subdue the region called Zandoma, northwest of Tenkodogo. The Ninisi of this region quickly accepted his authority. He acknowledged their claim to the land by calling them *Tinguimbissi,* "sons of the earth," and allowed their earth-priests, the Tengsobadamba, to retain ritual control of the earth shrines. However, the Habe (Dogon) refused to submit to Rawa and fled to the safety of the Bandiagara cliffs. Ouedraogo did not wish his youngest son, Zoungourana, to leave Tenkodogo, and the young man remained with him.

According to Ouagadougou tradition, the successful exploits of the Mossi warriors soon came to the attention of the Ninisi chief of Guilingou village, near Ouagadougou. He and the chief of Ziri village sent a wife to Ouedraogo and requested that he join them in an alliance against their Ninisi enemies. Ouedraogo accepted the invitation and gave the woman, who was called Poughtoenga, to Zoungourana as his wife. She gave birth

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to a son called Oubri. Soon afterwards, the Ninisi returned to Tenkodogo and asked Ouedraogo to aid them in a war against their enemies. Ouedraogo did so, and in the process continued his conquest of the Ouagadougou region but died before completing it.

After Ouedraogo's death his elder sons refused to leave their kingdoms to succeed their father at Tenkodogo, and the territory fell to Zoungourana. He declined to continue Ouedraogo's wars against the dissident Ninisi elements of Ouagadougou but accepted the demands of the Guilingou Ninisi that Oubri, their daughter's son, be sent to rule their territory. Tradition recounts that the youthful Oubri settled with his retinue at Oubritenga near Ziri until he was old enough to continue the Mossi wars of expansion. Later he conquered Gangado, Lumbila, Boulsa, and Boussouma northeast of Ouagadougou before turning west and conquering Ninisi and Kibisi groups at La and Yako and chasing many Kibisi under a chief called Waregoumga into the Bandiagara cliffs. He then returned and conquered the Ouagadougou area itself after a bitter fight. He finally met his death in the Kipirsi region after having conquered Koudougou and chased defiant groups across the Black Volta River. By the time of his death the kingdom of Ouagadougou was firmly established. Along with Ouedraogo, he thus became known as one of the two founders of the Ouagadougou dynasty and the first *Mogho Naba* ("chief of Mossi country"). The Ouagadougou kingdom now eclipsed all of the kingdoms founded by Ouedraogo's other sons. It retained its ascendancy through the centuries, although this is denied by the other Mossi kingdoms.

As Ouagadougou developed, Tenkodogo declined; when Zoungourana's son, Sere, inherited Tenkodogo, his rule extended only over the neighboring Busansi. In time, Tenkodogo declined further, losing all control over the southern Busansi populations, which finally came under the tutelage of Ouagadougou, and which have retained much of their language and customs to this day. The kingdom at Fada-N'Gourma founded by Diaba Lompo gradually lost contact with the other Mossi groups and became a separate group known as the Gurmanche or Gourma. Although these people occasionally waged war on the Mossi kingdoms, they maintained ritual ties with them.

Rawa enlarged his kindom of Zandoma by expelling the Habe and absorbing the Ninisi population of Ouahigouya. However, his descendants ultimately lost Zandoma to Yadega, a prince of the Ouagadougou dynasty. This prince, a grandson of Naba Oubri, allegedly lost his rightful claim to power because he was away at war on the death of his father, and his younger brother Koudoumie bribed the electors.[17] When Yadega learned that Koudoumie had been elected, he led an army against him but found

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173 him too firmly entrenched to be deposed. He then returned north to a place called Gourcy in Ouahigouya. There he was joined by his sister Pabre, who brought him the royal amulets of Rialle (Ouedraogo's father), which she is said to have stolen from Koudoumie and which were believed to sanction the power of the Ouagadougou ruler. Koudoumie gathered his army and pursued Pabre in an attempt to recover the amulets, but he met so much opposition at Yako that he returned without them.

The struggle for supremacy between Koudoumie and Yadega led many of the princely descendants of Ouedraogo to carve out their own principalities from their patrimony and declare themselves independent of Ouagadougou. Faced with the dissolution of his realm, Koudoumie dispatched his sons to different parts of the kingdom to halt the process. There came into existence such principalities as Boulsa, Boussouma, Conquizitenga, Mane, Riziam, Tema, and Yako.[18] However, some of these princes joined the ranks of the rebels, who by this time had taken for themselves the title of *Dim*, meaning "submit only to God." The ruler of Ouagadougou later recognized the autonomy of these princes but not their independence from Ouagadougou.[19]

After Koudoumie's death his descendants at Ouagadougou continued to rule and to consolidate their territory. Each ruler resided wherever control of the population was most necessary, and the graves of the first fourteen rulers of the Ouagadougou dynasty are markers along the road to that dynasty's complete domination of the country. It was only during the reign of the fifteenth ruler, Mogho Naba Sana (ca. 1430–1450), that Ouagadougou became the permanent capital of the dynasty. Meanwhile, the northern Mossi, under Yadega (who had claimed the title of Mogho Naba and complete independence from Ouagadougou on the strength of the amulets brought by Pabre), were also extending and consolidating their territory. They had absorbed into the kingdom of Yatenga ("country of Yadega") all the lands in the kingdom of Zandoma, which had belonged to Rawa, the son of Ouedraogo. Under their rulers (the Yatenga Nanamse), these Mossi moved into the bend of the Niger, a region they called Ghanata, and sacked such towns as Djenne, Sarafere, Timbuktu, and Walata.

175 The author of *Tarikh es-Sudan*, a seventeenth-century chronicle, describes the attack on Timbuktu by the Mossi ruler, which took place about 1339:

> It was in the reign of one of the princes of [sultan Kankan Moussa's] dynasty that the sultan of the Mossi at the head of a strong army made an expedition against that city. Seized with fright, the people of Mali fled and abandoned the city to its assailants. The Mossi ruler entered the city, and after killing

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II

SOVEREIGNTY, KINSHIP, AND COMMUNITY

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THE Mossi restricted all important positions within the traditional political organization to persons who claimed lineal descent from Ouedraogo and Oubri, the ancient founders of the Mossi nation. Thus all the *Mogho Nanamse, Dimdamba, Kombemba,* and *Tense Nanamse*—the heads of kingdoms, principalities, districts, and villages, respectively—claimed descent in the royal line. The bond of kinship among all important Mossi rulers was symbolized by membership in the lion clan (*Gegema*) and affiliated clans or *boodoo* founded by ancient members of the ruling families. Although the Mossi respected clan totems, they did not stress clan organization. They were more interested in membership in the segmentary lineages within the clans.[1] Yet not all Mossi groups stressed lineage affiliation. This was of supreme importance only for nobles whose membership in particular segments of ruling lineages gave them access to the *nam*—the power first possessed by the ancient founders, which is described by the Mossi as "that force of God which enables one man to control another." So important was the corporate possession of the nam by a ruling lineage that with few exceptions, membership in such a lineage gave a Moaga noble status.[2] Lineage segmentation gave some segments easier access to the nam, however, and resulting conflicts over sovereignty gave rise to the various Mossi kingdoms, principalities, and even districts.

[614] 613 778 642 [554] [578]

Every Mossi ruling line attempted to legitimize its position by claiming the most direct descent from Ouedraogo and Oubri. The descendants of the founder of a local ruling lineage would claim that he had been an elder son deprived of his patrimony by unscrupulous younger brothers, or an elder son disqualified by a physical handicap from receiving the nam. Some ruling lineages even claimed that their founders had been elder sons who had voluntarily forsaken the problems of government and established new districts for themselves. Whenever tradition recounted that a younger son had indeed founded a kingdom or district, it was invariably said that he

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had done so with full permission of his father and in place of an unadventurous elder brother.

For example, the ruling family of the Boulsa province claimed that its ancestor, Naba Namende, was the eldest son of Mogho Naba Oubri and chose to become his father's *Kourita* (a young son of a deceased Mogho Naba chosen as his father's personal representative on earth) and go into exile rather than subject his younger brother to the ordeal. At the same time, Namende sought to retain royal power equal to that of his brother, the new Mogho Naba, by taking Oubri's royal amulets with him.[3]

Mane province, too, was founded by one Nyaseme, a son of Koudoumie, who felt that he should have been given the nam. When routed in battle by his elder brother Kouda, he moved into the region of Mane, where he defeated the indigenous Ninisi and ruled over them. The princes who broke away from Ouagadougou during Koudoumie's reign considered themselves theoretically equal to the supreme ruler. Thus, they took the title of Dim. By so doing, they dramatized their claim to equality of status, if not of power, with the Mogho Naba, and their determination to "submit only to God."[4]

The Mossi insist that the relationship between the Mogho Naba and the Dimdamba was similar to that between father and sons, since the Dimdamba were "really the sons of the Mogho Naba" and are said to have acted as such. This analogy is interesting in view of the Mossi traditional pattern of avoidance—combined with love and tolerance—between fathers and elder sons.[5] The Dimdamba were often allowed to act at variance with the Mogho Naba. Some of them shifted allegiance from kingdom to kingdom; others usurped the power of the Mogho Naba over smaller districts, or claimed that they had been given this power; and most of them regulated their own affairs with little interference from their sovereign. He, as "father," interfered on occasion in their internal affairs, demanding help from them and often chastising them if they failed to comply.

The Mogho Naba and the Dimdamba often appointed their younger sons or brothers as rulers (Kombemba) of the districts that made up their kingdoms and principalities. In this way, power and authority were kept within the royal clan and its lineages. Nevertheless, in keeping with the concept of corporate access to the nam, the rulers of these dependencies had traditions that served to reconcile their claims to kingly or princely status with their actual subordinate position. District founders, too, were often portrayed as eldest sons who had been cheated out of their patrimony or had voluntarily left it to establish new districts. In some cases, the legendary heroes were granted miraculous births as well.

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The people of Nobere district have a legend that its founder, Naba Biligo, was sired by a spirit who impregnated the wife of Mogho Naba Oubri. She carried him in her womb for more than a year, and noticed that although her belly was extended during the daytime, it was always flat at night. She became concerned and confided her worries to the ruler's first wife, who asked the other co-wives to keep vigil for the child. When they arrived in the evening, they noticed that the woman's belly was flat. They awakened her and kept watch until dawn. At cock's crow, the child Biligo returned from his nocturnal wanderings. Seeing the women, he fell from the top of the hut into his mother's lap and began to cry as though he had just been born. When Biligo grew to manhood, he went hunting in the Nobere area. He found the region so fertile that when he returned to Ouagadougou, he told his father, Mogho Naba Oubri, that he did not want the nam but preferred to conquer the Ninisi of Nobere and become their chief.

The people of Doulougou give a slightly different account of the founding of their district. Their founder, a man called Moumde, was also said to be a son of Mogho Naba Oubri. He did not like the capital, and rode all over the kingdom until he came to Doulougou. He liked this region so much that he asked his father to name him chief over its indigenous population. Oubri then sent down an army, defeated the Ninisi, and appointed Moumde as Doulougou Naba.

According to some traditions, Mogho Nanamse appointed their sons as chiefs of conquered districts. A more common tradition, represented by the Biligo legend, is that the founders of local districts conquered their territories with or without the permission of the Mogho Naba. Biligo, the founder of Nobere district, is said to have found the area sparsely inhabited by Ninisi, most of whom fled before him. A person of gigantic proportions, he easily defeated those Ninisi who elected to give him battle. He then went into the woods, where he invited the Ninisi leader, an earth-priest (Tengsoba) called Tedego, to return to the district. Biligo promised him and the other refugees safe conduct and good treatment if they agreed to return. Tedego refused, whereupon Biligo captured him and installed him in a special quarter, with the injunction that he and his family should make sacrifices to the local earth shrines (*Tengkouga*) in the name of the new ruling lineage. Naba Biligo went back into the woods, captured the other refugees, and resettled them in their villages. He allowed the local Tengsobadamba to retain their religious duties, but sent his sons to take political control of the villages. Not satisfied with the number of people under his command, Naba Biligo then raided Gurunsi country and cap-

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tured slaves, whom he settled behind his compound and in separate villages under their own chiefs. He also welcomed refugees from wars in other territories and established them in special villages under their own chiefs.

The Dimdamba followed a similar practice in establishing power and control. According to Cheron, when Mogho Naba Koudoumie sent his son Tiraongo to conquer the Ninisi of Boussouma, the Ninisi defended themselves fiercely. Tiraongo's advance was thus very slow until he found a Ninisi named Wine, dressed in a panther's skin and hiding in a hole, "who on the promise that his life would be saved, consented to serve as guide to Tiraongo and to make propitiatory sacrifices to the divinities of the country. Thanks to him, the Mossi were able to progress to Somtongande."[6] Boulsa tradition recounts that when Naba Namende left Ouagadougou as the Kourita of Mogho Naba Oubri and took possession of their province, he placed his sons at the head of the principal villages "in order to control it [Boulsa] better."[7] One son was even sent to rule over a village at the request of the local Tengsoba.

The villages that made up a Mossi district were usually ruled by chiefs who belonged to sub-lineages of the local ruling lineage. These village chiefs and the members of their lineage formed a noble class, the *nakomce* ("children of the Naba"). As long as a lineage held the nam of a district, all of its sub-lineages had all the privileges of the noble class, regardless of whether they had charge of villages. But if the Mogho Naba deprived a ruling lineage of the nam by deposing the district chief, all its members were reduced to commoner status. Such people still traced their descent from the Mogho Naba who was the ancestor of their lineage founder, but this relationship ceased to be important unless the lineage recovered the nam of the district. If it did not, the former ruling lineage officially lost its ancient link with the royal clan within a few generations and became a nondescript local group.

The place of a deposed royal lineage was usually taken by the relatives of the nobles who subsequently acquired the nam of the district. These newcomers were genealogically closer to the ruling Mogho Naba, and formed the new nakomce of the district. The new district chief sometimes sent his sons to rule over the villages under his command. But if the village chiefs did not suffer the same fate as their lineage head at the hands of the Mogho Naba, the new district chief often permitted them to retain their posts. Thus they retained possession of the nam but lost their noble status. They served the new district chief in a political sense much as the Tengsoba served him in a ritual sense.

The plight of deposed district nakomce shows quite clearly the distinc-

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chief), and the hierarchy of respect descended to the youngest nobleman of the youngest generation. Very often, the full-grown son and presumed heir of the district chief had to kneel in respect to a distantly related younger man of an elder generation. Of course, this deference ceased if and when he became chief. If he did not receive the nam, he continued to show deference to all his lineage elders. This distinction between nam and boodoo was a source of potential conflict within the ruling lineages. The people usually accepted the implications of both principles, but when they did not, there were dynastic quarrels and territorial secessions.

The age and generational principles also operated within non-noble ruling lineages, but here too they were often complicated by the possession of the nam. Those village chiefs who had lost their noble status but retained the nam acted as official Boodkasemdamba of their local lineage segments and had considerable influence over their lineage although they did not control all its segments. Each lineage segment had its own Boodkasma, who normally ran its affairs. But because of the importance of the nam in Mossi life, the Boodkasemdamba deferred to the village chief in important matters pertaining to their own boodoo. However, the generational principle was followed within the local boodoo. Almost no one deferred to the children of the village chief, who, after all, were not nakomce.

The situation within commoner lineages that did not hold the nam was quite different. The age and generational principles obtained within the lineage segments of these boodoo, but never *across* the segments, as they did across the babissi. These segments were more autonomous. Each had its own Boodkasma, who looked after it without deferring to anyone. This autonomy was all the more pronounced since the segments of non-noble lineages tended to be scattered throughout a district. They interacted socially and politically only when they were physically close. In any case, in the absence of the nam, the segments of non-noble lineages had no reason to remain together; they tended to lose their hierarchical quality and to become equal and separate.

As would be expected in such circumstances, not all Mossi lineages paid the same attention to their genealogies. Noble lineages kept track of their actual or putative ancestors, whereas non-noble lineages tended to ignore them and to let geographical proximity determine meaningful kinship ties. This loss of interest in exact genealogies was found even among lineages that had lost the nam of a district and with it their nobility, but still retained the nam of a village. Members of the minimal units in such lineages competed actively for the village nam and were interested in fairly recent an-

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cestors. They did not remember how they were related unless they happened to have a common grandfather or great-grandfather who had held the nam. The differential value thus placed on genealogies by the noble and non-noble lineages was due in most cases to the differential access of these lineages to the strategic resources of Mossi society. People who held the nam and belonged to noble lineages enjoyed special claims to goods and services. Those whose lineages did not hold the nam had no such privileges.

Because Mossi society was basically patrilineal, a man shared in the status and the corporate assets of his patrilineage. Conversely, a man had no access to the status or resources of his mother's patrilineage except for some ritual rights and duties that accrued to him as a *yagenga* (a sister's or daughter's son). These rights and duties included residence in the home of a maternal patrilineage during childhood, attendance at sacrifices to the mother's patrilineal ancestors, the settling of quarrels between maternal kinsmen, and ritual license to seize specific items of property from these relatives. This license dramatized the *lack* of access rather than *freedom* of access to the property of maternal relatives.

When a man's maternal relatives controlled the nam of the territory in which he lived, he could improve his social and economic position. In many cases, a young man who had gone to live as a "stranger" with a noble uncle or grandfather remained with these relatives. His privilege to remain was sanctioned by the Mossi belief that a boy's maternal ancestors would wreak vengeance on any person who tried to evict him from the village from which his mother had been "sent into the bush" (given away as a wife). By using various strategies and subterfuges, the "stranger" obtained wives through his maternal relatives and used their land and other resources. After several generations the lineal descendants of the "stranger" frequently became indistinguishable from their maternal relatives, although such cases were not often formally acknowledged. Whether these "sisters' children" ever managed to obtain the nam of their mother's patrilineage is a moot point, because in theory they could not. Yet, also by Mossi definition, a man could never inherit rights and duties in his mother's patrilineage; however, it is known that this did happen. It is possible that the close check kept by the ruling lineage on its genealogy made usurpation impossible. Yet I know of several cases in which candidates for chiefship feared competition from men whose descent actually barred them from the nam.

The son of a nobleman and a commoner woman seldom attached himself permanently to his maternal patrilineage, although he retained all of his customary rights, privileges, and duties in it. Occasionally, noblemen did attach themselves to their maternal relatives, but those who did had

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known, however, whether this woman was Biligo's daughter or one of his pughsiudse. The people of Passintenga claimed descent from Biligo's daughter, but the other groups in the district questioned this ancestry. The village called Bourougna had two chiefs. One, the Tang Naba, was descended from a son of a Ouidi Naba of Ouagadougou who had settled in Nobere; the other, the Yang Naba, claimed descent from an aboriginal Ninisi man and woman of Biligo's lineage. The Yang Naba was thus another of Biligo's yagense in the district. The chief of Nimpwe village was a descendant of the aboriginal Ninisi people and was the principal Tengsoba in the district. He had more ritual power than political power, however. The nam of Basbedo village was held by a man descended from Busansi refugees. Living in this village was a man with the honorific title of Soulougre Naba, who claimed descent from the most important Ninisi family who had lived in the district prior to the arrival of Biligo.

Most of the nobles of the local ruling lineage lived either in the saghse of the district villages or in isolated hamlets. Local tradition holds that one of the conditions set by Naba Ngado for allowing Biligo's descendants to remain as village chiefs was the right to settle nineteen of his sons in many of the villages. He allegedly sent *mabissi* (sons of the same mother) to the same village. By so doing, he took advantage of the normal lines of fission that are created after the death of a Mossi father and prevented undue rivalries. Yet there was no driving necessity for him to do so, because there were more villages than chief's sons available. In fact, there are still many villages without nobles in Nobere district. The people of Passintenga, for instance, allegedly refused to have nobles live among them, while the people of Nimpwe allegedly killed by sorcery all the nobles who ever tried to live there. The actual reason for the absence of nobles in these villages may have been that the district chief did not wish to send his sons to villages into which his daughters had married or where there lived earth priests who were thought to be powerful sorcerers. Nobles were often unwelcome, feared, and resisted, because they tended to exploit the village people and to take advantage of the commoners.

The villages of Nobere district, like those of other Mossi districts, were populated in part by refugees and strangers. Several saghse in Togese village were inhabited by Mossi refugees who had fled a district called Guiergo after a fight over the nam of that district. Scattered throughout the district's villages were people of unknown origin called Siamse. The Siamse found in the villages of Tewaka and Nabadogo claimed that their ancestors had "followed" Naba Biligo when he came down from Ouagadougou to found the district. Several saghse in Bourougna village were in-

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habited by Yarse, people of Mandingo origin who had been assimilated by the Mossi. There were no Fulani in Nobere, even though some lived in nearby districts. But in Pinse village there lived people called Simili-Mossi, who claimed descent from Fulani herdsmen and Mossi women. Basbedo village was inhabited and ruled by people of Busansi origin. They claimed that their ancestors had fled from famine and other hardships in Busansi country and had been granted haven by Naba Biligo. The people who lived in the two saghse of Nab'tenga called Dapore (Dapobi) and Baglere (Bangare) were serfs of diverse non-Mossi origin. Saghse or compounds of Gurunsi slaves were found close to the dwellings of nobles and village chiefs throughout the district.

The number of saghse in the villages of Nobere district varied according to the size of the village and the pattern of nam inheritance within the major lineage segment that ruled the village. The saka itself housed a minor-lineage segment. The larger the village's minor lineage segment and the greater this group's genealogical depth, the more numerous were its component segments and thus its saghse. The proliferation of saghse and minor-lineage segments within the ruling lineage of a village was dependent primarily on possession of the nam. As soon as a man received the nam, he obtained control over a large amount of goods and services. He was then in a position to obtain many wives for himself and his immediate relatives, and as a result his minimal lineage grew rapidly. In time this group became so large that it split from its brother babissi within the saka, and formed a new saka of its own. Finally, this babissi became a minor lineage in its own saka, in segmental opposition to the other babissi and minor lineages within the other saghse. If the descendants of one man retained the nam for about three generations, their lineage segment and saka grew larger and in time cast off its own junior segments. However, if the segment lost the nam to a man of another babissi and saka, it ceased to proliferate. Some such groups even declined and disappeared by fusing with other local segments of the same lineage. Here is how the system worked in Barkago village of Nobere district.

Barkago itself was founded sometime in the dim past by a son of Naba Biligo. It had an area of eight or ten square miles and a population of about 650 when the French arrived in 1896. Its boundaries were set by such natural phenomena as clumps of trees, hills, and ravines. The village itself included five distinct saghse separated by footpaths, hills, rocks, and ravines, and an area of wasteland (*weogho*). Three of the saghse, Natenga ("chief's land"), Godin, and Kedpalago, were inhabited by the minor segments of the boodoo of Naba Biligo. Here is how this came about. After

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the original segment of the ruling Biligo lineage had lived in Barkago for some time, it divided into two minor lineages and settled in two saghse, Natenga and Godin. A noble from Godin possessed the nam, but it eventually passed to a noble from Natenga. The new chief then founded a new saka called Kedpalago because he wanted more living space for his own children. As a result, the minor lineage of Natenga now had two babissi living in two saghse. The minor lineage of Godin subsequently declined in size and prestige. The only evidence of its former importance was that its eldest male continued to make separate sacrifices to his own chiefly ancestors, even though the more recent holders of the nam made sacrifices to all former chiefs. These independent sacrifices were made in spite of the fact that this minor lineage kept growing smaller because its male members left to live elsewhere or to join maternal patrilineages with higher status. The sacrifices were expected to cease only if and when the minor lineage were to disappear with the incorporation of the widows and orphans of its last surviving males into the other Biligo groups of the village and district. Of course, if the Godin minor lineage had regained the nam, it undoubtedly would have experienced a rebirth and renewal of strength. It might have attracted its daughter's sons, and even aliens who would have lived in its saghse as they did in those of the ruling lineage segments.

A fourth saka, Nakomgo ("we hunger after the nam"), was inhabited by the noble descendants of Naba Ngado, the district chief who had replaced the descendant of Naba Biligo of Nobere. Since these nobles traced their descent from two full brothers, Kouliga and Kongo, they formed two related minor lineages with five component minimal lineages. The compounds of the two babissi of the Kouliga minor lineage were separate but contiguous. Near them were the compounds of the three babissi of the Kongo minor lineage. Scattered about in the Nakomgo saka were compounds of sisters' sons, strangers, and nobles' slaves.

The people of Narila, the fifth saka of Barkago, were members of the aboriginal Ninisi population, and thus furnished the village's earth-priest. He made sacrifices to the earth shrines in the village, gave ritual permission for building compounds and digging graves, and took control of the village during the period between the death of a chief and the accession of another. Scattered throughout the various saghse were compounds inhabited by people of serf, slave, or refugee origin.

Of all the groups within the village, the Ngado people kept the most exact genealogies. They did so because one of the segments of their maximal lineage held the district nam, and as nobles they had theoretical access to it. Once they had lost the nam of the district, the descendants of Biligo

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643 796 La, a village near Koudougou district. His eldest wife, the *Pughtiema*, appeared carrying her household utensils in order to accompany her husband. However, all the ministers, led by the Kamsaogho Naba, implored the monarch to have his horse unsaddled and to postpone the trip until the following day. Feigning anger, the Mogho Naba reluctantly agreed to remain in the capital, ordered his horse unsaddled, dismissed his wife, and re-entered the palace.[8]

● 173 643 796 The tradition about the origin of this ritual reveals something of the Mossi attitude toward the human frailties of their rulers. It appears that Poko, the favorite wife of Mogho Naba Waraga (ca. 1660–80), asked permission to visit her father at La, and that he refused to grant her request because of his love and admiration for her. Nevertheless, she continued to ask him for permission, and after her third request he granted her wish and sent a page and a small girl with her as chaperons. When Poko did not return to the palace on the third day, Naba Waraga sent two pages to her father's compound to fetch her, and here they discovered that she had died. Fearing the king's wrath toward persons who brought bad tidings, the pages did not report back to him but notified the ministers of Poko's death. When subsequent messengers also failed to return, the king decided to go to La. The following day, after the morning ceremonies, he ordered his horse saddled and commanded the Pughtiema to get ready to accompany him on his journey. But the ministers, anxious to protect him from grief, told him that a great king never followed a mere woman under any circumstances and persuaded him not to depart. The monarch went back into the palace, and the dignitaries ordered the horse unsaddled and sent it away. Shortly afterwards, the king changed his mind and decided to go to La, but he was beseeched not to do so. He swore that he would leave the following morning, and that if he were prevented from doing so, he would advise all his descendants to try to go to La every morning until one of them succeeded.[9]

643 644 692 576 [431] At the end of this ceremony, a page gave the ministers an ample supply of beer and kola nuts. The Moslems were given presents of kola nuts and millet water (*zom kom*) sweetened with honey, since they were forbidden to drink millet beer. Later in the morning, the Mogho Naba left the palace and entered the zongo, where he greeted his visitors, accepted gifts from visiting chiefs and subjects, dispensed gifts in turn, and presided over the court of justice. Anyone who went to see the ruler had to be accompanied by his provincial minister or his host—regardless of whether it was his purpose to pay a courtesy visit, to pledge allegiance, to plead for aid, or to give testimony in a lawsuit. Pages moved back and forth between the palace and the courtyard, dispensing kola nuts and beer or millet water prepared

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643 641 tree and again received oaths of allegiance from his chief ministers and other dignitaries. He then proceeded to the house of the Ouagadougou Naba (a direct descendant of the aboriginal Ninisi population), where he spent the night. The following morning, his host made sacrifices to his Ninisi ancestors in the name of the new ruler. Once again, the principal ministers and dignitaries appeared and joined in a ceremony of allegiance to their king, but this time they drank a potion prepared with the namtibo and swore that they hoped their ancestors would kill them if they should prove disloyal to the Mogho Naba.

The monarch then left the Ouagadougou Naba's compound, accompanied by the Tansoba and his warriors, and went to Paspanga (a ward in the capital whose name means "to add strength or power") to receive homage and allegiance from his assembled district chiefs. Along the way, he met symbolic opposition from the candidates he had defeated. However, these "hostile" forces were quickly routed by the Tansoba and his army. According to one Mossi tradition, when Sagha I (ca. 1787–1803) was elected Mogho Naba, his father's brother, Kaoko, tried to kill him during this mock battle. A vigorous civil war ensued, in which some district chiefs joined Kaoko. Sagha defeated and killed Kaoko and many of his supporters, and then swept through the country, executing rebellious district chiefs and placing his own sons in power.

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At Paspanga the sovereign sat under a tree, surrounded by his ministers, warriors, and musicians. The onlookers formed two facing ranks in front of the sovereign, between which the district chiefs and their retinues walked up to pledge their allegiance. Those members of the royal sub-lineage who had been put to flight by the Tansoba's army returned and rendered homage to the monarch. Emissaries from the autonomous Mossi princes also greeted him.

When this ceremony was over, the Mogho Naba instructed his retainers to provide food and drink for his subjects and guests, and retired for the night. He remained at Paspanga for a week, during which time he greeted those persons who had not arrived in time for the first day's ceremony. On the seventh day, the monarch and a few courtiers and retainers retired to Dimvousse ("king's resting place"), where the district chiefs who had come to Ouagadougou for the installation brought him presents before returning home. The Mogho Naba remained at Dimvousse for a period ranging from several weeks to three years, depending on whether the earth-priests advised him to inhabit his predecessor's palace or build a new one.[21] When at last he ended his retreat, a large crowd of horsemen, warriors, and musicians accompanied him to his palace, where he set up his permanent court.

644 Under him were the Kos Naba, who levied taxes on general merchandise sold in the markets, and the Nemdo Naba, who collected taxes on meat sold in the markets and was responsible for distributing meat within the royal household. Most of these positions were hereditary, but here primogeniture was not as important as in the ruling and administrative lineages.

The various foreign groups in the capital also sent representatives to the court. Among them were the Zangweoto Naba for the Hausa, a Naba for the Songhai, and an Imam for the Ouagadougou Moslems. Even total strangers such as the early European visitors were placed under the care of a special chief.

The most ubiquitous persons at the Mogho Naba's court were the pages, who were boys between the ages of ten and twenty. These boys were regarded as comparable to the ruler's wives, since they served him in the same manner as ordinary Mossi women serve their husbands at home. They wore women's bracelets and women's clothes, and dressed their hair in the same style as the royal wives. As we have seen, they were forbidden sexual intercourse until they were released from the royal household.[22]

173 644 The institution of pages is said to have originated sometime in the seventeenth century, during the reign of Mogho Naba Waraga. Before his reign, the wives of the Mogho Naba attended him at court. The change came during a lengthy civil war between Waraga and the chief of Riziam territory, who had refused to pay allegiance to him. During five "dry seasons" (five years) of fighting, the Mogho Naba was attended only by a small boy. He found him so efficient that at the end of the war he resolved to employ only page boys and prohibit his wives from attending him at court. This origin is conjectural. However, the use of pages effectively segregated the royal wives from court intrigues, and, once instituted, the practice spread throughout the country.

644 The Mogho Naba had little difficulty recruiting pages. Many of them were the sons of pughsiudse whom he had given to his subjects as wives. In theory, the Mogho Naba could select boys at will, but in practice the pages were usually selected by the ministers and sent to the palace. Most boys willingly accepted service, but some, often with the support of their parents, resisted confinement to the palace. Some ten-year-olds even ran away to escape their impending fate, but they were soon caught and braceleted with the insignia of their new status. Once this had been done, their lineages encouraged them to remain at the palace. Their period of service terminated when they began to "push beards," usually at about eighteen years of age. One district chief claims that ancient Mogho Nanamse used to take the sons of district chiefs as pages and release them only wh n their

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went to Djiba when his grandfather died and his father was installed as Mogho Naba.

The origin of Djiba's status as the seat of the Crown Prince is rather obscure. The people of the neighboring district of Nobere say that Djiba was founded by a "companion" of their own founder, Naba Biligo, one of the numerous "eldest" sons of Mogho Naba Oubri, the implication being that Djiba was supervised by Nobere. However, no one seems to know when Djiba's status changed or what happened to the ancient family who used to govern it. The consensus is that in earlier times the heir presumptive to Ouagadougou did not necessarily become chief of Djiba, but was given any district whose chieftainship was vacant when he came of age. Dim Delobson reports that Djiba became the district of the Crown Prince sometime during the seventeenth century, when Mogho Naba Zombere, who had reigned for sixty years, found it necessary to establish a permanent seat for his heir.[38] However, Dim Delobson does not report under what conditions Djiba was chosen, nor does he say what happened to the local ruling lineage when this transfer took place. That the transfer was carried out in the manner reported by Dim Delobson is not doubted, because each new Mogho Naba obtained districts for his relatives in this way. Through this process, the people of the ancient ruling lineages were usually reduced to the level of commoners, and this is apparently what happened to the rulers of Djiba.

The first public sign that the young prince was being prepared for the nam came in the form of a summons commanding him to go to Ouagadougou to be installed as Djiba Naba. On his way to the capital, he visited several villages where the local Tengsobadamba made sacrifices to the earth goddess in his name. He took this opportunity to meet with the district chiefs and their assembled village chiefs; he was entertained by them; and in turn he distributed gifts to the old women, whose praises were considered especially effective in bringing health and long life. When the boy finally arrived at the capital, he lodged at the compound of the Kambo Naba, head of the palace guard, until the Mogho Naba and his ministers installed him as chief of Djiba.

The installation rites for the Crown Prince were very similar to those already described for the Mogho Naba, and identical to those for the district chiefs. During the ceremony, no mention was made of the fact that the prince was the son of the Mogho Naba. The only special feature was that when the prince went into the courtyard after the ceremony to render homage to the Mogho Naba, he sat in an area assigned to him by custom. When the ruler appeared, the prince followed the Gounga Naba, who was pro-

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longing to other provinces. Provinces also differed with respect to the number of districts they included and the nature and size of these districts. Some provinces were larger than others; some were wealthier; and some were more difficult to administer.

Each province was administered by a governor, who also functioned as an important minister at the court of Ouagadougou. In the order of their importance, these governors were the Ouidi Naba, the Larhalle Naba, the Gounga Naba, the Baloum Naba, and the Kamsaogho Naba. Smaller administrative units (both districts and villages) were under the direct control of the Mogho Naba himself, or under the supervision of his relatives or lesser officials. None of the governors were nobles or descendants of Ouedraogo and Oubri, but their positions were hereditary. According to one tradition, the first provincial administrators were personal slaves of the early Mossi rulers who were given the task of supervising the activities of district chiefs of noble status. Another, more romantic tradition is that the man who became the first governor or Gounga Naba was a companion of Mogho Naba Oubri during the conquest of Ouagadougou. Later, the Gounga Naba presented one of his friends to Oubri with the request that the man take precedence over him, be made chief governor, and be given the title of Ouidi Naba. Oubri allegedly acceded to this request, and later granted another request of the Gounga Naba that a friend of the Ouidi Naba be named Larhalle Naba and be made the second governor. The Gounga Naba told the Mogho Naba that he preferred to see his friends happy and that he was content to be third minister. This tradition does not state when or how the Baloum Naba and the Kamsaogho Naba were named governors.[21]

With the exception of the Kamsaogho Naba, who was a eunuch and had no heirs, the provincial governors headed administrative lineages. These lineages provided administrators not only for Ouagadougou but also for the principalities and districts. Cheron states that the Ouidi Naba of Boulsa was "a descendant of the Ouidi Naba of Ouagadougou, a great dignitary who rules a province and sits among the electors of the Mogho Naba."[22] Many administrative lineages on the district level were descended from officials sent down by the Mogho Naba with a new district chief in lieu of one deposed. When a chief was deposed, his administrators, like his relatives, lost their importance and their ties to Ouagadougou.

The Ouidi Naba, called *Moss' ba* ("father of the Mossi") and *Sida soba* ("master of the truth"), was the principal administrator and the prime minister. His titles undoubtedly sprang from his important role in the election of the Mogho Naba and from his position as caretaker of the king-

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VI

WARFARE

The Mossi were proud of their warrior tradition, which had earned them their several kingdoms, principalities, and districts. Even the least district chief had stories about the wars in which his ancestors had wrested their territories from aboriginal populations. These traditions of conquest legitimized to a large extent the power of the Mossi kings and chiefs, who never hesitated to use force in order to obtain tribute, to maintain their rule, and to enforce their authority. The Mossi value fighting ability so highly that even today, when fighting is no longer necessary, most Mossi males in the rural areas carry sticks and other weapons on their shoulders as symbols of manhood. In their view, every man should know how to fight and should be able to defend his village, his district, and his kingdom.

According to tradition, the northward thrust of the Mossi warriors during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries carried them into the region of the Niger River bend. Here, around A.D. 1329, the Yatenga Mossi attacked and sacked the town of Timbuktu, which belongs to the Mali. When Mali was on the decline during the early fifteenth century, the Mossi again attacked its towns. According to the *Tarikh es-Sudan*, when the Mali ruler appointed Amin-ben-Ahmad jurisconsul of Timbuktu,

> the sultan of the Mossi led an expedition against Benka. The population of that region went out to engage the enemy, and at that time left others sitting around El Hadj. He pronounced certain words on the millet which was being served and asked those around him to eat of it. All of them ate except the son-in-law of El Hadj, who did not because he was related to him. "Now go and fight," said the holy man, "and you will have nothing to fear from the weapons of the enemy." All, in effect, returned safe and sound, and only those persons who did not eat the millet died in the battle. The king of the Mossi was routed, and his troops were chased without having seized anything from the people of Benka. All this thanks to the protection of the blessed person.[1]

Later, the Mossi attacked towns of the Songhai empire whenever they felt strong enough, only to be driven away later by a stronger adversary. Sa'di describes a Mossi incursion into the Songhai empire as follows:

pleted, the remainder of the ceremony followed the pattern of the Ouagadougou ritual.

During the weeks that followed, the village chiefs and the heads of the larger lineage segments all offered sacrifices to their ancestors. The Pughtiema of each prominent local administrator, chief, or lineage head prepared and poured the millet water as a libation to the ancestors. Whenever possible, each of these personages invited musicians to sing praises to his ancestors. He dressed in his best robe and sat outside his hut to receive presents from his relatives, friends, and subjects, along with their best wishes for the new year, and for long life and prosperity. In return he gave them kola nuts, beer, and food. Thus, in celebrating the Basgha, all the Mossi were united in prayers and supplications to the ancestors, upon whom rested the future of their country and the successful reign of the descendants of Ouedraogo and Oubri.

The earth deity, Tenga, held the central place in the second major religio-political ceremony which linked all Mossi. This ritual, called *Tense* (from *tenga*, "earth") and sometimes *Naba Oubri ma koure* ("the anniversary of the funeral of Mogho Naba Oubri's mother"), was so important to Mossi cohesion that it was banned by the French, and as a result its main features are now unclear. According to tradition, Naba Oubri loved Poughtoenga, his Ninisi mother, so much, and was so pleased with the elaborate funeral he gave her, that he decided to repeat this ceremony each year in the hope that his subjects would be blessed with the bountiful crops and herds which had made the first one possible. Curiously enough, Oubri's mother was not a central figure in the Tense celebration. Instead, great stress was placed on the fructifying powers of the earth and on the importance of the royal ancestors in Mossi life. The juxtaposition and association of the earth deity with Oubri's mother has important implications for the Mossi political organization. Mossi tradition holds that a Ninisi woman was the ancestress of the Mossi of Ouagadougou. Her people probably celebrated the Tense as a fertility rite to their earth goddess, Tenga. The Mossi apparently took over the ceremony and used it both as a fertility rite and as a memorial festival, thus symbolically uniting the conquerors and the conquered.[8]

In contrast to the Basgha, no special date appears to have been set for the celebration of the Tense. It was held sometime before the crops were sowed, but according to Tauxier it was not celebrated at all in Ouagadougou when the previous year's harvest had been poor.[9] Before setting the date for the festival, the Mogho Naba summoned the Larhalle Naba and ordered him to have sacrifices made on the graves of all former rulers. This minister

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Voulet left Ouagadougou in February to establish French control among the Gurunsi, leaving a military commander, Captain Scal, and a Resident Officer at Ouagadougou. But he acted without taking into account the resourcefulness of Wobogo (now once more Boukary Koutou), who had gained the allegiance of chiefs in the Manga area. The Gounga Naba, who was provincial minister for that region, tried to gain the support of the Djiba and Rissouma districts for Mogho Naba Sighiri. He failed, and ordered the troops of Garanse, Nobere, Toisé, and Yake districts to attack Boukary Koutou's supporters. In the ensuing battle the Gounga Naba's forces lost nine men, the rebels ten. The Gounga Naba considered these losses too high and called off the fighting.[46]

Meanwhile, Boukary Koutou had sent an appeal to Steward, the commander of a British force that was then on its march of conquest through Gambaga and that had designs on Ouagadougou, "for protection in virtue of the treaty concluded with Mr. Ferguson in 1894." Wishing to avoid conflict with the British, Voulet hastened to Tenkodogo in February 1897 to meet Steward, and the two men established boundaries between the French and British spheres of influence. Boukary Koutou was thus left to fend for himself.[47] Undaunted, he crossed the Gold Coast frontier once more and proceeded toward Ouagadougou. Scal heard about his activities and decided to launch an attack against him. He took Boukary Koutou by surprise in June 1897, and forced him to flee. Boukary passed through Bere district and arrived in the Gold Coast, where he was granted refuge by the British. About a year later, he convinced a Colonel Northcott that he had been unjustly deposed by the French, and that under the treaty of 1894 the British were his protectors and were obliged to restore him to his throne. In May 1898, a British force under Northcott and with Boukary Koutou in tow arrived at Kombissiri, some twenty-five miles from Ouagadougou, but here they were met by French emissaries who brought with them copies of the treaty of protection signed by Sighiri in January 1897. The British troops retreated, taking the dejected ruler with them into permanent exile.[48] Boukary reportedly settled at Zangoiri, a few miles from Gambaga.[49] He was forbidden to enter Gambaga because of the tradition that if he ever saw the Gambaga ruler, both of them would die. Boukary never returned to Mossi country. He died and was buried in the Gold Coast in 1904, but his funeral was held at Ouagadougou.[50]

Boukary Koutou is seen in retrospect as a tragic figure, whose main fault seems to have been that he ruled at the most difficult time in his country's history. Judging by his treatment of Binger, he appears to have been a clever politician, but his resources were of no avail against the

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superior might of the French. Like many other African groups, the Mossi have now evolved traditions to account for his fall and for the conquest of their country. They say that Wobogo lost his realm because he was a cruel ruler. According to the Mossi, he executed the noble retainers of Djiba in whose care his heir had died. But most important, the Mossi believe that Boukary was destined to lose his country to foreigners. According to one tradition, a holy man warned the ruler of Tenkodogo that an evil child who would bring harm to the country would be born into his house unless his birth was prevented by oblations to the ancestors. The Tenkodogo Naba made the necessary sacrifices, and the tragedy was averted. The holy man then went to Ouagadougou and gave the same warning to Mogho Naba Koutou. Koutou replied that he was the direct descendant of Ouedraogo and Oubri, and that no child of his could bring harm to the patrimony of the royal ancestors. He made no sacrifices, and a child who had "two teeth like the tusks of an elephant" was born into his house. This child, Boukary Koutou, was disrespectful of his father and made war against his brother, and was eventually defeated by the French.

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
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CHAPTER 9

Trade and Markets Among the Mossi People

BY ELLIOTT P. SKINNER

The Mossi represent the dominant population of the Voltaic Republic, numbering about 1,600,000 out of some 3,200,000 inhabitants. They represent the unique example of a group which has preserved its ethnic identity and political autonomy through all the vicissitudes of Sudanic history until it was conquered by the French in 1896. Tradition records that the people who became the Mossi left the Dagomba region in present-day Ghana during the eleventh century and moved into the bend of the Niger River, carving out three large kingdoms and smaller principalities in the process. At the head of these still extant kingdoms are rulers *(Moro Nabas)* who formerly held feudal-like control over the provinces, districts and villages which comprise their domains. The villages, with their patri-local, polygynous, extended family households, formed the basic Mossi settlement pattern. A complex hierarchical administrative apparatus carried the power of the Mossi rulers into the smallest villages, and funneled taxes and tribute back to them. This structure still exists, but of course it has been modified by the French.

The Mossi were and are still divided into stratified royal, noble and commoner patrilineages. Characteristic of this lineage system is a process by which royal sub-lineages descend serially until they merge with the mass of commoner lineages. Below the lineages there once were large non-Mossi groups of serfs and slaves, but these people have now been grouped into lineages and have become Mossicized.

The topography of Mossi country is typical of the Sudanic grasslands. It is an immense plain, some 1,500 feet above sea level and broken only by three low mountain ranges and numerous small hills. The annual total rainfall is between 30 and 40 inches, and falls almost entirely as heavy showers or thundershowers during the period from June to September. So narrow is the margin of rainfall for successful crop cultivation that any variation in the cycle results in low crop yields and a difficult "hungry period" the following year before the new crops are harvested. The Mossi do not practice irrigation, and would have trouble doing so because the three Volta Rivers which drain their territory serve as drainage chiefly during the rainy season. Only the Black Volta has water all year round; the

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o'clock in the morning to sell food to those migrants who have slept under the trees or in the deserted market place and who are going on towards Ghana or to Wagadougou. At about 8:00 or 9:00 A.M. the majority of the food-sellers leave for home, but some of them remain around all day to sell to those migrants who pass by in the few trucks which can travel during the heat of the day. The food sellers then return at about 5:00 P.M. because from this time until about 1:00 A.M. most of the trucks bearing migrants stop for water and to allow their passengers to eat and rest. The amount of money these women gross varies from day to day depending upon the amount of traffic and the time of year. During the off-season from June to October, when most of the migrants are home planting, a woman may make as little as ten francs per day. In contrast, at the beginning of the dry season when the young men are migrating in droves, the women may make as much as 100 francs a day, even though twenty or thirty women line the road at trucking centers. Many women welcome this opportunity to earn money because by so doing they are free to buy in the local markets the things they need.

MARKET

The Mossi have always conducted most of their commercial activities in market places even though some extra-market trading continually takes place. These markets were and are still divided into two main types: (1) those specializing in external trading, such as Pouitenga, Dakay, Kaya, Mane, Yako, La, Beloussa, Tema, Wagadougou; and (2) those specializing in internal commerce such as the markets in the villages and district centers. Of course, there is an overlap between the two types of markets in the sense that some people from the villages go to the larger markets to dispose of their commodities and, in turn, buy goods which they bring back for resale on the local level. Similarly, in former days some caravaneers visited the local markets to buy commodities and in the process disposed of their goods. However, the main pattern is for local commodities to filter into the large market centers through local markets, and for goods from these centers to filter back down to the local markets. The more goods and traders available, the more numerous and successful the markets are.

The Mossi do not appear to have any legends about the origin of markets in their country. When asked how and why markets first arose, they say that markets developed simply because people wanted to exchange goods with each other, or because the chiefs wanted markets in their own villages so that their people need not go to other districts. When one asks the Mossi directly, "What is a market?"